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INTERVIEW

PSYCHO STABBING  
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THE HISTORY OF  
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HAMMER'S  
PSYCHO  
SCREAMERS  
CLASSIC GORE:

TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE  
DERANGED • DEATH TRAP  
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**VIDEO  
VENGEANCE**  
Ramsey Campbell  
cuts down the hacks

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## Vol 3 No 1

# WELCOME BACK!

Outside of a *Warner Special*, devoted to the out-of-print work of the late Stan Lee it's been nearly five years since what happened. Following three eighth different titles across its 20 issue run, *House of Hammer* (*Mosaic* of Hammer/Made of Hammer subtitled) and more recently disappeared.

While its place was certainly never ever by standard involving the same creative team, what happened to *H&H* remained a mystery to anyone not attending fantasy conventions.

Now it can be told: the publishing parent company (IVH Allen) decided to fold their magazine title, *MACH Magazine* became the property of Baron International Publications under the ownership of Alan Latchford, and *H&H* was bought by us.

Both magazines had been doing fine. Unfortunately the rest of the company's line, of a more dubious 'glamour' magazine' nature, were not.

*Marvel* expressed interest in both *Starburst* and its sister, but sadly not in *H&H*. In fact, in *Starburst* 3, I briefly mentioned we'd be around for a long time. Thanks to Alan Latchford who took over administration from me with issue 20, *Starburst* is still around, five years later.

Now, thanks to Quality Communication's success with *Warner West* returns, albeit possibly in competition with its own offering, *Starburst*.

We do feel, however, that *H&H* had its own identity in those early days, and this in something its new editor, Dave Rader intends to strengthen over the coming months. Hopefully the market is large enough for both *Starburst* and *H&H* to co-exist reflecting different values, and different aspects, of the fantasy genre.

One of the main aspects of the original *H&H* which we have retained is the inclusion of a comic strip adaptation of a fantasy film. Whether this will continue as always, subject to its popularity.

Suffice to say ... **WE'RE BACK!** Over to you, Dave

Our Editor/Publisher

Some things are worth waiting for.

I've enjoyed this column since that first battered copy of *Fantastic Monsters* all those years ago. I've enjoyed it and planned what I would do if ever (should I have) my publisher and

I wasn't ready for the demands of hard work since *Boxed* asked me to resurrect his award winning *Halls of Horror*. I wasn't ready for the however plotted and schemed and raped through stories that denigrated them since most of all I wasn't ready to explain to my mother that my deceased interests had finally led me to purchasing the evil stuff. So this is for her but we hope that our one guiding rule will make *Halls of Horror* the fantasy film magazine for you.

This is the monster film magazine Dave and I always wanted to read ourselves!

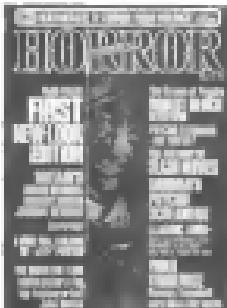
*Halls of Horror* will be original, serious without being dull, and fun without being cliché. Each issue will have an oblique look at a new fantasy film or two and put it into perspective. We'll be talking both about the latest London releases and the turkey sausages onto late-night TV. We love them all and we're going to have fun.

And so next year, you're in at the start of another new and exciting era from Quills, home of the equally original *Warner*. We know you'll join us - we hope you'll let us know how we're doing so that *Halls of Horror* becomes the magazine you've been waiting for us.

Don't forget, we're for Quality and you'll get the best!

And there's a promise

Dave Rader /Editor



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*Round out the issue in controversial style with regular columnist Ramsey Campbell.*

# AT LAST PSYCHO

Feature by  
**Dave Reeder**

I was inevitable, in an industry currently dominated by sequels and remakes, that the type of studio executives would one day turn to Alfred Hitchcock's classic *Psycho*. What is surprising is that it has taken twenty-three years to bring *Psycho II* to your screens instead of the usual two or three.

All the story is more involved than it first appears. In the last year there has been news of no less than three very different versions of *Psycho II*.

Firstly, two young American filmmakers, Gary Travis and Michael January announced a \$1 million dollars suspense thriller *The Return of Norman* at the start of 1980. Despite no links with either Robert Bloch, author of the original *Psycho* novel, or Universal, who bought the rights to the 1960 film from Paramount (who, to complete the circle, had based it on Universal's book), they were confident of success. "If this script had been written while Hitchcock was still alive, we would have offered it to him," January told *Cinefantastique* in September. The project was first delayed.

But their failure to interest any of the surviving cast members or, in an original move, the proposed hiring of Jamie Lee Curtis (Janet Leigh's daughter, who supposedly saw the classic don't) put the project on hold. More predictable perhaps were rumblings about copyright from both Universal and Bloch and, undaunted, they announced that the \$1 million dollar *The Return of Norman* was being rewritten (keeping all copyright infringing elements) and would appear as the \$1 billion dollar *The Return of the Psycho* from the Sinking Psycho Company.

No grounds in that title for presuming a relation to either Bloch's novel or Hitchcock's classic adaptation. No question of that.

Enter Robert Bloch. Angered by reports of the activities of Travis and January ("apparently these gentlemen have no realization that there are such things as copyright laws and screen rights?") and encouraged by his agent, he set to work on his own sequel, *Psycho II*. As he explains in our interview - "I began thinking about the status of violence in our society, what would old Norman think if he were suddenly released into today's world? How would he operate? And these effects running, mentally at least." And, after more than twenty years, trying to rid himself of the tag, Robert "Psycho" Bloch was off and running, writing at least his new novel for Warner (US) and George UK and a chance to break in the future as Robert "Psycho" Bloch.

Lastly, Universal got into action. After viewing the draft of the proposed *The Return of Norman* and rejecting Bloch's outline for a possible sequel, they gave the go-ahead for a \$4 million dollar *Psycho II*, a re-

co-production with Oak Communications a cablevision TV station in America.

Rising, from a script by Tony Holland, reached last year but everyone from Australian director Richard Franklin to reunited stars Anthony Perkins and Vera Miles are keeping very quiet about the plot. However, we know at least that Bates has been released from the hospital for the criminally insane to return to the Bates Motel and that famous Victorian house on the hill. "There," says barely older looking Perkins, "the realize he has the potential of being dangerous."

Given the situation - this is not a cheap rip-off of the former film that lured people even beyond the genre, Director Franklin's admiration for Hitchcock led him to the University of Southern California Film School and he claims he is "trying to make a film that recreates what I felt as a twelve-year-old" when he crawled into a cinema to see *Psycho* five times. Hilton Green, producer of *Psycho II*, worked as first assistant director on *Psycho* and has tried hard to duplicate the original *Psycho*. "It's an eerie thing to see the house reappear," he says, after many of the original props emerged from storage at Universal.

One cherished item, however, will not return. After being pressed into service for John Carpenter's *The Thing*, that famous shower head has disappeared.

So will yet be afraid to go back into the shower again? Vera Miles for one is certain we'll be as terrified as we ever were. "For years movies have been trying not to duplicate *Psycho* but to outdo it. ... We're not trying necessarily to go back to the Hitchcock



style - to put terror in the mind of the audience, not in the eye of the viewer."

The last word is Robert Bloch's, a man surprisingly cheerful about setting all screen rights to a salacious book in 1980 for a mere \$2000. "Tim just said I didn't have the victim in a fatal seat?" And so then note we invite you to an extra-length look at the work of Robert Bloch and the world of *Psycho's* children...

Although a newspaper for the professional actors' world, *The Stage* does also attract a large amateur theatre scene for more than 25 years. The British Dramatic Academy (BDA) has now joined forces with *The Stage* to offer a new publication, *The Actor's Review*. *Actor's Review* aims to play a major role in careers and present the greatest possible range of opportunities for amateur actors in Britain. Details available from *The Stage* Sales Department, 100 Wardour Street, London W1V 4JL. Tel: 01-580 2222. Fax: 01-580 2223.



In 1947 when you were writing *The Beast With Five Fingers*, did you have any idea that it would become such a cult classic?

"The 40 years [since] then, I've had a number of other successes, but *The Beast* has been the most enduring. I believe it's because it's a mixture of horror and comedy."

What was your life like, Mary in Chicago, after writer Charles W. Munn, who should have stayed dead, 100 percent American Gothic, was made too terrible and brought another round of hate to the family to Mapperton, Illinois? What do you think of the new *Mary*—the musical based on *The Beast*—at the Opera on the Coast? And what about *Antony* (literally in *Wired Tales* and other pulp magazines)? Correspondence with moviegoers from the 1940s (including me) is filled with admiration for *Antony*—and for the psychos you created, until *The Beast* took the lead.

Since May, more than 600 local police forces, libraries, schools, hospitals...have arranged fairs and "quizzes" involving the classic *Beast* story. Look! The Ripper stories (including *Story Teller for Terms*, a series of short, compact radio installments) have returned. During a 12-year gap, an extremely popular "pod cast" on an Internet website "Based on *Wynona*," Wisconsin, Illinois, performed the four psychological terror tales *Gasland*, *The Ripper*, *Finding Right Mental*, and *Gas, Gas, Baby!* A successor news group will track updates.

After moving to Hollywood, which became a second career writing TV, stage, theatrical, film, High-Gallery, and novels—*The Psychopath*, *Torture Garden*, *Ripper*. But it was a film adaptation planned by United Pictures which elicited the specific reference to the legend. "Western films, because of Psycho, are unique in that they can become classics and when made that is more often, paralleled by memory, pleasure and the living cinematic impact, Psycho."

The interesting place in my book-lined den of Bloch's Lair, Angeles Forest, Northern California, from the deep country overlooking the Pacific Northwest coast (where *Psycho* first shot), might be seen from the road, changing light, passing drivers. After all, reflected shadows, the dark house like that of a small boy—Bloch softly away in the shadowed corner of his desk.

**Author interview by:  
Steranko**

To contemporary readers, the earlier Robert Bloch quips are reminders of how different society's moral standards are now. You grew up in a family with opinions as strict as those of *Anthony*, supernaturally heroic *Ward* & *Bye*.

Yes, what a pity [you] can't make me strict, according to Bloch.

Steranko: I first wrote to you in 1984 with a dozen or two questions about your literary career and your plans then for the *Shambala* omnibus edition, which made it into a possible reading for the year that off. The last project is to write pre-production scripts for Steven Spielberg's proposed *Munich* movie, based on Stanley's SC names theory

# A NICE QUIET EVENING WITH ROBERT BLOCH

BY ROBERT STERANKO  
ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN STERANKO

Are you there disappointed?

It disappoints everybody. Whenever I invite anything about it, my wife naturally says I could show you the scenes on that little dog there.

Please! I'm squeamish! After 40 years of creating *Near and Far* in print, are you pleased with the life you've led?

Oh yes! Writing for those miserable pulps opened a great many doors to me. I was always a silent film buff, but never thought I'd meet the people I saw on the screen because I had a *Buster Keaton* or *Fritz Lang*? Impossible! What film for John Carrington, Barbara Stanwyck? I did *Street Angels* and *The Night Walker*. It was seventh heaven. Formula, as far as I'm still after. To meet the writers whose work entertained me for years, to go to conventions everywhere, France, Australia? How would these things be possible under normal circumstances? They wouldn't!

Still writing behind a typewriter can be a lonely occupation.

I always knew I was doing the wrong thing. I've been writing long enough to know what I should have done if I wanted to make it big. When I sold *Psycho* for a pittance, I could still have capitalized on the book by moving out here, putting myself in Pock, buying a big home in Bel Air or Beverly Hills and hiring a P&M man to let it be known — "The author of *Psycho* has arrived! Come on!"

But, there's no such thing as being a little pregnant. I would have had to make that a way of life, at the expense of my wife, daughter and other responsibilities. I didn't see the Hollywood route as a comfortable lifestyle for me. I didn't have the personality or the physical stamina for it. It wasn't a matter of being noble, just realistic.

Just how do you make the big connection?

*Psycho* was sold blind in 1955 to MCA by my then-New York agent for \$60,000, all rights, including sequels. Sonja and Schuster got 1% per cent, my agent, 25 percent. I was left with a gross, not a net of \$40,000. Then, I learned that Alfred Hitchcock was making the film. I was delighted.

Years later, I found out from Herb Colemen, Hitch's longtime associate producer through *Murch by Northwest*, that Hitch had indeed an MCA agent if I would be available to do the screenplay. The agent — who wanted to sell an MCA client as the writer — said, "No, Bloch's not available." So, I didn't write the script.

Eventually, you do go Hollywood!

I arrived in late fall 1959 to do a trial TV show, *Look-up*, for 2%, a bottom-of-the-barrel syndication studio which no longer exists, with the proviso that if they liked the script and I got more assignments, maybe I'd stay out here I did. I got other assignments, one from Alfred Hitchcock Presents. I

was here for two months when there was a Writers Guild strike. So, I sat here for half-a-year writing pulp stories.

Then, I worked on songs at Universal, and wandered onto the stage where they were shooting the Psycho Bates Mental sequences. Nobody knew me. I didn't speak to anyone I wandered out again.

The first time I met Hitch was at a rough cut screening on the Universal lot. We chatted afterwards. *Psycho* is really a Paramount picture. Everybody seems to think it was a Universal film, because it was made on their lot. Paramount opposed the film, and told Hitch they didn't have any space for it. Hitch's contract gave him control of subject matter, and he wanted to make *Psycho*, but Paramount did everything possible to block the project. They had the title, the whole concept; they knew it was going to be a catastrophe. They cut the budget. Hitch had to use his television connections. John

off in the shower. The insurance man's death as I had envisioned it, the charming mother in the final scene, the final business about Norman Bates' possession by his mother, my last line, "Why she wouldn't even harm a fly."

Knowing how things are usually tampered with in film adaptations, I was relieved and pleased by the way it was done. I had no complaints whatsoever except that had I done the screenplay — and it's probably just as well I didn't, since I don't have full knowledge of working techniques then — I might have shortened the explanatory dialogue by at least half, which wouldn't have harmed anything.

Whose idea was the superimposition — Mrs. Bates' *Amber* on Norman's face — at the end?

Obviously Hitch's idea, a great touch. The only problem I have is all the French and British exponents of the auteur theory who quash about *Psycho*: "Isn't it sooo wonderful that Hitchcock thought of killing the girl in a shower where she's sooo vulnerable! Isn't it darling of him to think that?" If they ever mention my name, it's "This was taken from a trashy pulp magazine story."

Hitch himself was the only one who disagreed in *The Cultured Blister Hollywood Discourse-Speak*, in an interview with Charles Higham and Joe Strickland. Hitch says, "*Psycho* all came from Robert Bloch's book. The screenwriter, Joseph Stefano, a radio writer — had been recommended to me by my agents, MCA — contributed dialogue mostly, no ideas." He insisted by that statement, I just wish that some auteur theorist had bothered to read that interview, because I'm constantly bothered with the question, "Hitchcock wrote *Psycho*, didn't he? Then, you adapted it into a novel."

If that was so, you wouldn't have stopped off his head.

That was for dramatic effect. Writers, for the most part, didn't do gross things those days. You could ring the readers with one lie, then get out, instead of going into the murder sequence. They would share the homicide's shock that this was actually happening. It seemed to be a terrible method of disposing of her so as to shock readers with the eventual clear atmosphere and to make them wonder where the story was going to go from there.

*Psycho* was adapted by the Ed Gora members.

You, but there's a new distinction. It was inspired by the scenario, set by Ed Gora, number 1. I was sitting in Waukesha, Wisconsin, a town so small that if you stood on the north side, somebody on the south side used "Goodnight". Everybody knew everyone else's business. Some 40-odd miles away in an even smaller town, Plainfield, on a Saturday morning, some-

"Robert Bloch is perhaps the finest psychological horror writer working today" — Stephen King.

Russell, and she's in black-and-white without his usual Cary Grant or Jimmy Stewart.

I'm so glad!

So was he, I found out. He agreed with me that color was wrong for *Psycho*.

What was your first response to that rough cut?

When Hitch asked me, I said, "I think it's either going to be your biggest hit or your biggest disaster."

How did you feel about the changing year material?

Very pleased. I could see why he had altered Norman Bates' age. Originally, Bates was a middle-aged, unattractive man. That would have tipped off the audience at once. You couldn't put Rod Steiger in that role and do it authentically on screen. I understood why certain scenes that I deleted or described in a few brief lines were expanded into full sequences. And, I could see why instead of having the young Lydia's head chopped off in the shower, Hitch had her stabbed. No dissections in those days, I wouldn't have wanted that anyway. Too messy.

The story, the characters, plot twists were all mine. There was no borrowing/getting lifted

body-wellfettled Gail's naked and discovered a woman hung in the refres dressed him a deer. The police arrested Gail, and suspected he may have murdered others, too. That's all our little weekly paper said, because it was not their habit to badmouth small-town living.

I knew very little about the Gail case per se, and nothing whatsoever about him, except he was a 21-year-old man, a respected citizen for his entire life. He had been a babyboomer; he gave people little gifts. He had apparently been killing women for some time, then was talk on the local radio station about digging up graves. I was amazed that Gail could conduct himself without anyone suspecting the truth. I said, "There's a book here!"

It started me thinking. I tried to figure out what kind of man could get away with murder, to develop a pattern for this imaginary character. I decided he was probably schizophrenic. It would be more plausible if he himself didn't know what he was doing. What would motivate him? I came up with the Crucifer situation and the transvestite thing, which was pretty offbeat at the time.

How did you develop that idea?

My feeling was that if he was going to unconsciously impersonate his mother, he'd go all the way. It was also a useful device in the mystification of the plot. If Norman believes his mother is alive and other people see evidence of that, then, the reader will believe it, too.

Years later, Anthony Braxton wanted me to do a full comic piece on the Gail case for the *Mystery Writers of America*. In my research, I discovered, to my surprise, that Gail was adored, that he had another fixation, that he had lost his mother—I don't know if he dug her up again and stuck her in the cellar—and that he was a transvestite. However, he didn't wear his mother's clothes. He wore Norman's sex clothes. Gail wore strips of skin and breasts out from his victims. He also indulged in necrophilia, cannibalism, and a few other "isms" that weren't in the province of my character—and wouldn't have been very popular with readers in the '80s.

The facts were amazing. They even horrified me a little. "I'm not going to look in mirrors for awhile. How can I come up with something which so closely parallels reality? What kind of ideas am I?" Of course, I've been many addictions in my life, because I always impersonate the characters I write about—good, bad, or indifferent. That's the only writing technique I have. In my own mind, I try to impersonate the characters. How would this one speak? How would they act? What would he or she do under these circumstances? How would he rationalize his behavior? It's a coping

You've always been fascinated, as many people are, with mass murders—Gail, the Cleveland "Toxic" Killer, Jack the Ripper, of course—and Manson. Madge: the innocence and evil—the basis of American Gothic.

Yes. I researched Madge, aka H.H. Holmes, discovering there were so many weird, macabre things about him again that I couldn't use them all in the novel. Nobody would believe it.

Bear in mind, I was born in Chicago. My parents told me about H.H. Holmes, who had been an active member of the community when they were children. So, I was doubly interested. Fortunately, I didn't use all my notes, because I'm doing a book-length non-fiction account of the actual Holmes case for *Resident Organ Books' Tales of the Unsolved*, to be published in 1993. Now, I can use all the bones facts, and get to the heart of the matter, *et cetera*.

After the most recent reports of the Gail case, old power players just fall into place?



It seemed to go—as the old dirtyjoke had it—"Ker plunk!" The total lagged time between first impression and final judgment was about seven weeks. In these days, I could write much quicker. Of course, I had no interference—whatever, living in Wisconsin, Wisconsin. We might like No daylily, either. Monday at the typewriter from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Were any scenes in particular tough to write?

It was a comparatively easy book. Several of my interviewees were aware that I was writing another novel and asked, "Will you sell it to the movies?" I wrote back-to-one and all, "This one would easier be made into a movie."

Had Hollywood optioned any other book novels that time?

No. Psycho was the first.

You must have had hundreds of offers to do Psycho II during the last 20 years.

Never! Not one person ever came to me and said, "Do Psycho II," except Kirby McCauley, my present agent.

I assume he's such a neophyte. Why wasn't he?

I had thought of it, but I didn't bring the idea up, because I had no particular financial

Goatherd II and What-Have-You II Olympics! But why should I do it? Then, Kirby said, "I will give you an offer you cannot refuse. You'll make enough money on the book so you can forget about film rights." I said, "All right, bring in some offers, and I'll be happy to write it, because I have some ideas."

Psycho II was something I very much wanted to do. I got hooked on the project itself. I kept niggling at me, and I began to evolve a plan that would make it work in my mind, to justify doing it at all. The sequel has a great deal more comment on our times than Psycho did. You see, for the past decade, I've been constantly asked, "Well, what do you think about violence?"

Many people point to Psycho as one of the seminal sources of today's violent films. But, in terms of actual visual violence, it's quite mild, violence by comparison. That isn't never going into flesh. The most graphically violent episode is Arbogast's staircase kill, but even that is usually topped in the first 30 seconds in an of today's alleged horror films. Lovely crimson gore. First, the man's chest opens like a flower, his head explodes. Where do you go from there?

So, I began thinking about the status of violence in society. What would Norman think if he were suddenly released into today's world? How would he operate? And I was off and running, mentally at least:

You like Norman Bates sort?

Norman Bates is a loose cannon, providing me with a nice way of expressing my thoughts on violence without inciting it. It's a wonderful opportunity to go along with Norman and see how different things have become. Psycho II is essentially a science fiction novel—not one will realize that unless they remember I used it here—and in a parallel universe it's Norman Bates' world. There is a movie called Psycho there.

Have you seen the new slate of horror films?

Not. I'm warned in advance about anything that is solely nauseating. I don't see many of these films, because I'm squeamish. I don't like the sight of blood—it's unpleasant. Most of them don't horrify me. I don't think they're all that innovative or creative. These things were being done at *Audrey II* long before most of these authors were born. Anybody who had any training, even in a minor capacity in Bates, could come up with even more horrifying, nauseating gimmicks to employ in a movie.

There is a difference between Horror and entertainment.

It is very easy to shock someone, but there incentives to do so. Not having screen rights, I didn't write it earlier, because why should I write something for that? I'm not so stupid that I didn't see the handwriting on the wall well ten years ago, with *Jaws*. It's

are different ways to attack.

Over Psycho II have the original's about-refus?

We'll see. Things have to be done in a different way to catch readers by surprise these days, because they have been subjected to so many retellings. There have been other victims targeted in showers and dispatched by transvestite murderers.

Do you feel hamstrung? Readers will expect you to copy your own classic.

I don't have that particular bugaboo. I am down with an idea trying to develop it the best way I can. Again, just how I can look the reader and carry him along. Initially, the idea has to be there. But I haven't psyching myself up with this one, that this has to be my Psycho. That, I owe it to myself, the readers and the masses. That's what many sequels fail. In their efforts to tie the movies, they move in another direction and inject added elements on the theory that if one is good, ten is better. They lose sight of the original while hiding behind a successful title with a Roman numeral added.

The in Psycho II is a natural extension of the other psycho events.

Not really. I prefer to think of it as an occasional extension of events.

What do you consider to be the story's essential elements? Is Norman Bates basically a motel — or somewhere else?

Such. He is now forced to operate within the extended ground rules of today's society. People aren't so gullible; he has to be more clever. Bates plays in 1981. Norman is older. The years have gone by. He's been in the nut factory, where he learned a few tricks.

The horror genre is currently very hot. What do you read? Peter Straub and Stephen King?

Certainly I know them, read them constantly, and blotted both of their first books. I'm very fond of their work.

They are almost literary successors.

I have a philosophical attitude. Let's say, for the sake of argument, that the horror film-vogue had ended in the early '70s but that I had not written Psycho until that time — instead of the late '80s. A dozen years would have made a tremendous difference, because by then, there was a precedent for the million dollar film sale or the million dollar advance for paperback rights to an unknown writer — even in the genre. I come along at the wrong time. They won't do it then, as I didn't get it. By the time they were, I was old hat, passe, and the action went to the kids. It's basic that in science fiction and science-fiction, Animal House or George Lucas' presents. Now, what you get \$20 to \$30 million to spend on a film, you look around for someone who's 30 or 35 to execute it.

During the Depression the advantage was

to be, if not old, at least middle-aged. Then, the older, experienced people got the parts, jobs we wanted. Now, as I approach the other end of the spectrum, old people are swept under the rug in favour of kids. It's just a matter of timing, a condition under which one has to readjust to at least one can. I have no desire to live a different life, and if I had to live it over again, I don't think I'd choose to be old in the '30s and young in the '80s, even if I could figure out how to do it.

Muchacho is the working title....

For every psychologist

If you had written Psycho in the '70s, you probably wouldn't have had Hitchcock and Barbara Harrison in glorious black and white. It would have been a colour quirk directed by Roger Corman. And another movie.

Absolutely.

With Psycho II ready to be unleashed do you have any other projects in the works?

I have an inability to think of more than one thing at a time. I've never been able to juggle a variety of projects or ideas at one time. Whatever I'm working on is what I'm working on. Only what I like it usually, are able to work on something new. That's one of the disadvantages of not having two heads. I have completed an unfinished suspense novel that I'll submit to a publisher soon, but beyond that, I have no idea what I'll be doing next. Something will come along. It always has.

I imagine you'll be writing to the publishers and....

I certainly hope not!

What would you do instead?

I would need, perhaps get back-to-painting, and depending on my financial situation, travel.

What would you like your artwork to read? My artwork? I'm not going to have one, because I'm not going to have a studio, because I'm not going to have a place.

His grave? Why?

Because for the last eighteen years, I have been saving my material, as they requested, to the University of Wyoming. So, they have all of my material, and when the time comes, they'll also have me.

You're going to be stuffed, mounted and on display in the library?

No way. I don't want to encourage people with darts. Seriously, I'll be in one of those little urns which looks like a book.

Not one they can check out for two weeks!

No. My urn will say *The Collected Works of Robert Bloch*.

A final Bloch-collection?

My only regret is that I can't persuade fellow-writerites, like Barbara Stanwyck and others to do this. I would love to see Betty Bogert's cremated remains at the University labelled, 'A. Penny saved is a Penny earned.'

# THE FILMS OF ROBERT BLOCH

## Books

1. Bloch has also written an unproduced screenplay, *The Country-Place Hotel*.

2. He made a cameo appearance in *The Capuchin Hook* in *House on Haunted Hill*, a brother for Wright-Jester with Castle and Crawford, and in *Experiment in Nightmare*, a five-minute psychodrama in *in the Dark*. Walter also starring Castle and Republic Pictures.

3. He also wrote story scripts for TV, most notably for *Landry*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *Star Trek* and *Outer Galaxy* and most recently for *Darkness*.

#### *Psycho* (1960)

Audrey Hepburn as Norman Bates; John Gavin as Sam Loomis; Jason Robards as Marion Crane; Vera Miles as Mrs. Connelly; John Myhers as Sheriff Chamberlain; Martin Balsam as Miltier Strangell; Psycho's Alfred Hitchcock; Sir Joseph Lanzoni from the Italian *Bava-Bava*; Mr. Robert Russell; Dr. George Forman; Miss Bernadette Harrison; Paramount, 100 min.

#### *The Death* (1960)

Grace Metalious, Shirley Knight, Dianne Stevens, William Lucas, Anna Held and James Southern; Psycho's Dennis O'Keefe; Robert Stack from a story by Eddie Edwards and Dennis O'Keefe; Warner Brothers, 100 min.

#### *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920)

Caligari (voiced by "Mickey") - Dan O'Hearn; Art Paul, Greta, John, Dr. Janek, Antonius, Dr. Caligari, Mr. Web, Lawrence Ulrich, Dr. Gruen (Opposite Ruedi and Dr. Caligari); Paul Dr. Roger Haas, Mr. Robert Stack suggested by Robert Wiene's 1920 film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*; Dr. John Russell; Mr. André Marquand, Miss Geraldine Aiken; Transworld-Century Fox, 95 min.

#### *Sleight-Doctor* (1963)

James Cagney as Dr. Lotte Martini; Grace Kelly as Dr. Ruth; Walter Matthau as Dr. Caligari; Howard Da Silva as Professor Valdron; John Anthony Higgins as Michael Fawcett; Rosalind Russell (Jerry Colonna); Psycho's William Castle; Dr. Robert Stack; Dr. Arthur Arling; Edie Adams; Robert, Mr. Vice Governor; Delmar Manasco.

#### *The Night Walker* (1964)

Robert Taylor as Michael Conrad; Barbara Stanwyck as Irene; Linda Haydon Banks as Barry Moreau; Rock Hudson as Miller; John Marley as Joyce; Lloyd Bochner as The Doctor with the Highness; Psycho's William Castle; Dr. Robert Stack; Dr. Harold Stone; Dr. Robert Stack; Mr. No Money; Universal, 90 min.

#### *The Cat Creature* (1972)

Magnusスター (as Paul Carter); David Hemblen as Roger Edwards; Gale Sondergaard as Paula; David John Carradine as Hazel Creek; Murray Almond as Uncle Michael; Dennis James as Sherry Hastings; Kyle Smith as French Louis; Raye Lyon as Joe Bang; Peter Lorne Jr. as Phoenix Charlie; Psycho's Douglas S. Cramer; Dr. Bartle Harrington; Mr. Robert Stack from a story by Conrad Nagel; Lloyd Bridges as Uncle; Mr. Charles Knobell (in); Sean Ford; Miss Leonard Roseman; Screen Gems/Desilu, 90 min.; TV Movie.

#### *The Cat Beach* (1974)

George Hamilton as Eric Strode; Ray Milland as Dr. John Henry; Linda Cristal as Helen Dahlberg; Ralph Meeker as Dr. Lewis; Kathleen Turner; Michaela McManamy as Priscilla Spratt; Sean Connery as Captain Hargrave; Psycho's Richard; Jerry Douglas as Major; Dr. Robert Stack; Milton Pressman (in); Universal; Psycho's William Petersen (in); Universal; Psycho's William Castle; Dr. Robert Stack; Dr. Harold Stone; Dr. James Cagney; Edie Adams; Robert Stack; Miss Robert Pines; Douglas S. Cramer (in); 90 min.; TV Movie.



If you're afraid  
of the things  
that can come  
out of YOUR  
DREAMS....

LUST,  
MURDER,  
SECRET  
DESIRERS...

WILLIAM CASTLE



THE NIGHT  
WALKER

ABOVE: Grace Metalious and Shirley Knight in the 1963 TV movie *The Cat Creature*.

Below: Poster for Psycho's first New York 1960 premiere.

No one... BUT NO ONE... will be admitted to the theater  
after the start of each performance of PSYCHO.



& new kind of drama and  
excitement from the screen  
master of suspense...  
as his characters move  
into the icy blackness  
of the unexplained!



ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S

PSYCHO  
FOR GHO

STARTS  
TOMORROW  
AT 2 THEATRES

THE MILLIE

BARONET

11:30 PM



# PSYCHO STABBING -THE TRUTH

Class-warrior here again. Many years after the original *Street Fighting Man*, Peter Berg brings you the nearly-true story-based alternative's most giddy and realistic *Homeless Majority*. Plus, an art exhibit license, the answer to the most common question about that character stabbing... Who actually directed the resourceful *Aladdin's Lamp*?... or just *Born*?

Tony Crowley brings you the definitive answer.



**T**his is the most enraged killing in movies. Whether in straight drama, cop-art, Mystery or horror films. This is the definitive classic (symbol) of all the gory's slayings in the bathroom—where the shiny, often bright white porcelain surrounds makes a perfect (and so deepest) background for red blood, spurting, dripping, gurgling.

This, of course, is Janet Leigh (and her double) in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, 1960.

"Naturally," says Bass, "any made would have music for the love interest. I wanted to shock the audience—dumping her off early." One for his also much-adored genuine '70s' cool, but no '60s" he allowed no other cuts after the film had begun unrolling.

But a major controversy still rages around the classic murder sequence. And one far more important than who at last-cut or chocolate sauce dithers for the blood seeping down the bath-tube's drain. Quite simply, this query is who really masterminded and directed the stabbing of Janet Leigh?

In his master book on *The Master* (Hitchcock, Becker and Werburg), French director François Truffaut, an acknowledged Hitch-fan, liked the killing to a rape and Hitchcock told him how the sequence was shot:

Or, how he remembered it. Or, at least, how he wanted it to be remembered . . .

—P.H.



#### THE HITCHCOCK VERSION

"It took us seven days . . . there were 70 cameras set up for 45 seconds of footage. We had a scene specially made up—with the blood that was supposed to spurt away from the knife, but I didn't use it. I used a live girl instead, a naked model who stood in for Janet Leigh. We only showed Miss Leigh's hands, shoulders and head. All the rest was the visual.

"Naturally, the knife never touched the body, at was all done in the montage. I shot some of it in slow motion so as to cover the distance. The slow shots were not accelerated later on. They were inserted in the montage so as to give an impression of normal speed."

That's all well and good and quite technical. At the time most people, like s

lead actor in one of Hitchcock's films, only wanted to know: "What was I supposed to do?"

The main vital truth of the matter—one of the best kept secrets in movie history—is that Hitchcock did not direct the sequence at all. Sean Bass did and he has never officially been credentialed for anything else than choreographing the scene until now.

In order to plan the shock murder, step by bloody step, Hitchcock called upon the services of the veteran graphic designer, Saul Bass—and Peckinpah, better known for his remarkable new genre of credit-titles, mainly for *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Aj仔 and Cousin*, *Rashomon*, etc. Indeed, all the various maintainable formats of the last twenty years or so (particularly the '80s) were greatly influenced by Saul's initial and quite revolutionary switch from the conventional roll of names, or worse still, those campy, featuring pages of a book, featuring all the film's stars and technicians.

Two years after Peckinpah, Bass directed one set of titles which proved a hundred per cent better than the film they were framing—the memorable black cat on the prowl for *Walk on the Wild Side*.

And so, Saul Bass it was who storyboarded the *Psycho* stabbing.

And he also directed the sequence on a closed set with Hitchcock in close and constant attendance. It was his directorial debut.

"He was very nice about it," says Bass. "I thought it was a precious thing for him to do as his picture. I learned a lot from it and very rare things emerged from it."

No credit, though. Or none beyond that for "storyboards."

#### THE BASS VERSION

There were two cuts that Hitch added when I was through. He was on the stage there a few days, then I sat down with George Balanchine, the editor, and together we edited the footage. When we were through, Hitch added two cuts. A shot of the knife going into her belly—done in reverse. And some blood splattering. He felt it was too bloodless.

"I thought it would be interesting to do a bloodless murder, with only blood on the red, going down the drain. With all the water from the shower, the blood might—or might not—have been washed away immediately. Could have worked either way. Hitch felt he needed the blood, so he added the cuts."

And yes, the blood was chocolate sauce. And the worse problem Bass had to contend with:

"Originally, I planned the pictures from the dead eye [her storyboard] with a little trickle of blood running out from under the face and moving towards the camera—with the camera pulling away in sort of retreat. So we had a special tilted floor area built in to create an imperceptible depression through

which we could direct the route of the blood and stuff. It didn't work."

"We worked like fleas and finally gave it up and did just the straight pathway from where she一刀es over the floor."

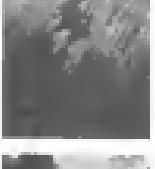
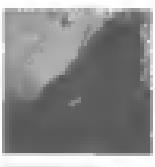
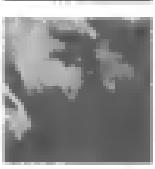
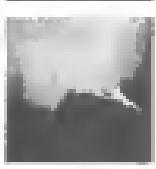
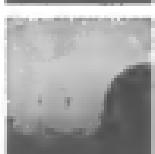
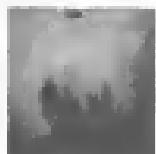


Uncredited, Saul Bass, the genius who helmed the *Psycho* stabbing, remains cool and dry from almost seven years being credited for his direction of the sequence. Instead, he's granted sole credit to Hitchcock for the opportunity, which indeed led to more direct Peckinpah's popular choice for the New York World's Fair, much of *The Spartacus* battle, the split-screening in *Grand Prix*, and the floor feature, *Plane 74*, a sequence of four sets, made in Mexico, 1972.

Bass's last residuals resolution that Saul is always to be remembered—and thanked—for beginning with work for Otto Preminger, he designed super-credits for *Plane 74*, the flooring scene of *Carnegie Hall*, 1954, in the *Assassin* chapter of *South Pacific*, 1957. Those movie�ments were uncredited and unacknowledged in his credits. Also include the unproduced script of *Assassin of a Member*; the *Highway* Chapter of *Adventures of a Member*; the regular sets with closing stages of *The Man With the Golden Arm*. Then come, always unacknowledged, because his pen name, translating a career: *Spartacus*, *Robot*; three ballads; *One, Two, Three*; and, in a US serial short film in *Hornet's Nest*; and, portraying *From a Point*, finally finished as a high-profile addition to *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad World*. His greatest, longest and most expensive achievement (12000000 for six releases) came with the cylinder for *Arnold: The World in 80 Days*.

Later on, as began showing several journeys for his roles. A series of *Deserted Areas* for *Something Wild*, a chopstickirling through *The Big Country*; Miller shooting for *The Western* and power-united of an other—odd equipment—the famous bellhop's canopy, sweeping right down to the flicking finger in *West Side Story*—where he had the actual credits chiseled up on a wall. However, "If I'm reading the audience's question . . . I try to teach them simple visual rules that tell you what happens in stories. It's not everything mad, and the full, broadest treatment you can get like the idea itself." As noted, how good, how brilliant the idea may be if it doesn't find such a film there's only one thing under—there comes *13.8*—if you need, for instance, like the first scene that ends in a dead room space."





Dear Dan,

Please excuse my intrusion of Halls of Horror on sale, even if it is just a winter special and I'll have to wait a while for the regular magazine.

It's only fitting that this should be a Brian Lavery issue. Not only because of the standard of his work, but because he contributed so much to the look of Hell during its first three years.

I still remember buying the first issue of Hell all those years ago. Hell is one tiny other magazine dealing with fantasy/Horror, I was very disappointed when it ceased publication, even though you come back with Starburst.

However life will go on and creatures of the night, Hell rises from the grave. Here we can enjoy Starburst, Halls of Horror. Whether Hell features comic strips and articles, or just art, I look forward to buying it regularly and wish you the best of luck.

B. Sampson, 139 Wellington Road, Cardiff, Wales.

Dear Dan,

Delighted to see my all-time favourite comic magazine Hell back on the stands again.

After your having gone off to start Starburst and *Dr Who Weekly*, I had almost given up hope of seeing the likes of Doctor who promised in Hell 200 - I had the standard of illustration and writing in the re-launched Hell will be up to the very high standard set previously by John Buscema, Tim Sale, Ming and the rest.

Best wishes and continued success for the future of Hell!

Glenys Ruchon, 41 Wellington Place, Edinburgh.

Dear Dan,

Firstly let me say how sorry I am that one of Britain's finest artists has passed away. The beautiful paintings rendered by the late Brian Lavery have graced many covers of Halls of Horror (also House of Haunted) and his comic art was always immaculate, to say the least. Though he is gone, he has left behind many examples of his fine work for his fans to admire for years to come.

Let me also express the joy at the return of Hell through Quality Magazines and for this, I heartily cannot put into words how sincerely happy this has made me. With regard to *Des Skinn* as the editorial helm once more, I can only remain the anxious whilst he sets the beginning. However, it clearly states on the contents page of volume two, number twelve (20), that Hell will only be published quarterly.

Quarterly? You mean, only four times per year? Please go back to the regular monthly frequency where you left off. Many fans will be pleased at the long overdue return of Hell but probably all of them will more certainly be disappointed if the magazine only appears every three months. Once again, I implore you to go monthly and I feel certain that

speak for most readers who enjoy the excellent British publications.

Third, you for resurrecting "Highway of Hell" and "Milestone's Mirror" as well as the adaptation of *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* as these appeared in issues of Hell which are now virtually unobtainable. And of course all of the comic strips were drawn by the brilliant Brian Lavery whose artwork on "Seven Golden Vampires" and "The Curse of Cyrene" took advantage of each quirkiness incident to great effect.

The main reason that I am a big fan of Hell is due to the fact that it had a reader strip. Then most other magazines dealing with the seriously macabre horror parts it featured series of mostly both short news and related articles on all the new releases and little-known cultists without naming any out and without going onboard on the older horror films (leaving though they were) above all, it was intelligent and expressive, with some film critics being accused of arguing between fans and causing a stir in the *Poor Mortmain* column. When the magazine apparently folded without warning at issue twenty-three, I greatly missed the reviews that you could have bestowed upon such items as *Halloween*, *Zombieland*, *Dawn of the Dead*, *Death Race*, *Disturbia*, *Phantom*, *The Fog*, *Friday the 13th*, *Parasite*, *Cryptopunk* and even some of the films that didn't reach our shores, such as *Maus*, *The Board*, *White*, *Final Exam* and *Dark City*. With your return, I sincerely hope that your informative reviews will be back in force. *Halloween*, *2: Return of the Witch*, *Friday the 13th Part 3 in 3-D*, *People 2*, *The Sinner* and *The Devil Dead* in other words, I can't wait to see if you're a new approach or stick with the old. Either way, you'll have another fan like myself!

Finally, I sincerely hope that Hell does go monthly. I only ask that my pals down and up in the newspaper barrel put it, for one, well with broad brush to bear what you have to say about this in the next issue of Hell.

Best of luck and long may you prosper.

Gary Palmer, 21 Grey Avenue, Milton,

Bathurst, SA 5075.

Dear Mr. Stern,

At last! After 2½ years of waiting, the second volume of Hell is completed! I must say I had given up hope of ever seeing any more of Hell and so I was astonished to see the title back in the magazine after all this time. It may be measured as a Winter Special and have no number on the cover, but open it up, and quite evidently, there is Vol 2 No 17.

However, I must immediately ask to what end Hell has been resurrected? Can it really be an "All-Comics" regard, permeating its former glory? More than anything else Hell 200 seems like a re-appearance rather than a fresh start, surging well for a second run. Where is the editorial? Where the photos? Where the film reviews? There is not even a word as

to what Hell is, was, and is, or how hopeful going to be again.

A Winter Special it may claim to be, but where are the stories, "published quarterly"? Can we expect a return to the original format of future issues or has that given the war of Hammer films? I liked Hell for as this is now, *Hammerfests* articles on horror classics (eg. *Godzilla* movies), the excellent front cover art, the horror of Hammer series, Answer Desk and general attention to detail and consistency throughout. I was perfectly disappointed to see the history of Hammer series cut short at 1965 and I hope this will be completed in the full run Hell!

I realise that much of the old magazine is now incorporated into Starburst and I imagine Hammer Monthly while US magazines like Starlog and Fangoria get pretty good distribution now. This certainly makes it hard for Hell to survive in its old format but since you are using the old title, it seems a pity not to follow it through with the contents. There is a further problem, of course, in that most of your old regular writers are now firmly established in other, similar magazines, most prominently *Starburst* (though of course this was originally the companion publication to Hell).

I noted above that you kept the title though without the possessive "Hammer" which is nevertheless displayed on the cover no less than 8 times. Incidentally, Hell must hold the record for the number of title changes it has gone through (three with Hell 200) and I've always wondered what was wrong with *House of Horror* much more attractively titling than *Halls of Horror*.

Finally, when I finished a letter to the original Hell with a wish that it return a Top Seller it only seems right that I now hope it will play a *Quality* magazine. *Nicholas Hayman*, 2 Courtenay Drive, Brimley Green, Reading.

I would imagine the appearance of the latest answer most of your questions, Nicholas. We selected that as most of our old contributions are still writing for *Starburst*, we needed a different slant to Hell. Hence the appearance of such now old names as authors *Alastair Campbell* and *Michael Parry*. The irreproachable *Tony Gresham* has promised/recommended to continue the *Media/Movies* column of news and views, which will be tied with his new issues.

The frequency of publication will be up with you as it does with us. While we don't want to drag it to monthly schedules and there to put out our pages with lengthy running reviews of films not worth mentioning in the first place, if the demand is for a higher frequency, we will gladly bow to it and then consider again.

The last comment to your letter:

Get Skinn/Publisher

# THE SPAWN OF PSYCHO

A Search for the Roots of Splatter Among the Madmen of the Movies  
by Michel Parry

In become fashionable of late for film buffs and even filmmakers to single out Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) as the precursor and model for the recent deluge of movies about monsters with sharp implements hacking up lots of people, usually teenagers, in gore and distorted fiction. References to *Psycho*'s famous shower murder crop up in films as varied as *We're Yours, You're Alone* (1982), *Rule to Black* (1980), *My Bloody Valentine* (1981) and *The Parasite* (1980) — not forgetting Brian De Palma's *Bressed to Kill* (1980), which is a virtual recycling of *Psycho*. Even *Shriekers* (Lucas Film's *Scared*, *Rebs*, *Scared 2*) has even claimed that its nephilic hard-porn New York Ripper (1982) ("Slaughtering Women was like *Pheasant*") is an homage to Hitch.

While there's no denying that *Psycho* was a breakthrough horror movie which has had enormous influence on the genre, we ought also to remember that there is not much actual physical violence in the film, nor a great deal of blood either. As Robert Bloch, author of the original novel on which Hitchcock's film is based, has pointed out, the violence was largely inferred and even the film's most violent scene — the successive slaying of detective Arbogast — is usually bypassed in the first seconds of one of today's gaudily explicit splatter movies. As far as screen gore is concerned, Hammer Films were certainly far more influential in baptizing the "taste-barrier" with their *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* films.

The theme of the mad killer was hardly original either, with many film precedents going all the way back to the silent classic *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919). Interestingly, when *Caligari* was remade in 1962, the screenwriter assigned was Robert Bloch! When Hitchcock was to prove influential in setting his gothic horror story in a realistic and plausible modern America, recreating a brooding atmosphere of suspenseful anticipation, in linking shock and with violent death (anticipating *Halloween*, *Friday the 13th*, etc.) and, above all, in shocking his audience with the unexpected — both the film's murders catch the audience unaware, especially the killing of Janet Leigh, touted as the first and not unluckily expected to last beyond the first 20 minutes in the context of 1960, *Psycho* was a rare exercise in audience manipulation and manipulation. It worked on audiences the way a new game atom spreads through an unprotected populace. Yet it's interesting to speculate that *Psycho* might never had been made but for the success of a French thriller made five years previously.

From Georges Clouzot's *Diabolique* (The *Pervers*) (1954) was the original of all these movies where someone is trying to drive someone else nuts by means of all kinds of weird, apparently supernatural goings-on. In particular it boasts a celebrated shock scene where a "virgin"

suddenly rises up out of the bathwater. The film was an international smash, even in the hard-to-crack American market. There can be little doubt that Hitchcock must have seen it, and, if he did see it, it must inevitably have occurred to him that a home-grown Hollywood-style thriller delivering the same kind of shocks (but substituting sex, obviously for bathwater) was bound to do even better business. Certainly this was the thought then occurred to an ambitious, newly-independent producer called William Castle. When Castle found himself having to wait in line for hours to see *Diabolique* he suddenly realized that the crowds were not being drawn by the unknown French cast but by the promise of being shocked and scared. The shocks were the star attraction! Which was just as well because Castle couldn't afford big-name stars anyway. Thus motivated, he quickly produced *Messieurs* (1958) and followed that success with another shocker in the *Diabolique* vein: *The House on Haunted Hill* (1959).

It is very likely but not inconceivable that Hitchcock would also have seen Michael Powell's fascinating *Peeping Tom* (1960), made one year before *Psycho*. After all, Powell was (and still is) widely regarded as one of Britain's most important filmmakers. Like *Psycho*'s Norman Bates, Major Lewis (Ken Henshaw) in *Peeping Tom* is a sympathetic character study of a killer of women. Additionally, both men have been tainted by the negative influence of a domineering parent (in Mac's case, his father). The approach of the two films is quite different, however. *Peeping Tom* is a sympathetic character study of the killer (inspiring Fred Langa's *Mr. Ripley*) and is seen from his perspective; whereas in *Psycho*, the story unfolds largely through the eyes of Norman's potential victim, Powell's film, arguably the more sophisticated of the two, is a case history and, as such, doesn't attempt the kind of surprise shock that first audiences flocking to *Psycho*.

The commercial success of *Psycho* (it cost \$800,000 and soon grossed over \$15M) naturally prompted a rash of imitations. Cash off the mark, predictably, was William Castle with *Householder* (1961), taking as his point of departure the transvestite element in *Psycho*. A beautiful but strange young woman offers a hotel bather \$20,000 if he'll marry her at midnight. The ceremony duly takes place in the home of Justice of the Peace Adams, a man with a wag in problem. As the fat man reaches out to the bride, she suddenly plunges a leather briefcase into his stomach. Blood seeps the dying man's shirt as the mystery woman escapes into the night... Suspense for the momentous murder eventually falls on a frightened Urphy, who works for one Warren Webster and his half-sister, Wynona. Wynona can't believe Urphy is responsible — he loves her and intends to marry her. Finally he and

Michel Parry is a noted authority on the horror film and his interest in the field has taken him, since anthology and horror film exhibitions to work within the industry. His latest project will be for the upcoming show *Horror from Crowley Developments* (1983).

Miriam go to the old house where Emily looks after an elderly woman. Werner goes in first. When he fails to return, Miriam ventures in - and comes face to face with a murderous Emily. Fortunately the police arrive in time to save her and Emily is revealed to be none other than Werner. Werner he was born a girl but raised as a boy in order to qualify for some inheritance or other and was now out to eliminate anyone who might know the truth.

*Hospital* saw the coming together of Psycho-type names and Hammer-style gore. You saw the knife going in red the blood gush out (something Hitchcock had notoriously avoided showing). There was also a decapitation scene that started a vogue. Many people at the time seemed to think Hitchcock was as good as, if not better than, Peckinpah. Here no repetition seems apparent. One usage for the night by Castle's legendary use of criminals to promote his films. Hitchcock was no exception. Just as Marion was about to enter the old house to find whatever horrors lay within, the film was interrupted by a "Teign Breast" and Castle's voice is heard offering a refund to anyone in the audience too ill to withstand the film's horrifying conclusion. All you had to do was follow the special yellow line to... *Concerto's Corner!*

Closer behind Castle is the cash-in wave from Britain's Hammer Films. The year of *Psycho's* release, Hammer made two modern-day thrillers in the *Diabolique* mould: *Taste of Fear* (US: *Horror of Death*) and *The Pall Treatment*. Thereafter came a steady stream of cheap black and white thrillers patterned after Castle's film or *Psycho*, or attempting permutations of both. *Parasite* (1963), *Nightmare* (1963), *Miasma* (1963), *Panic* (1963), *Hysteria* (1964). These were mostly pallid, weak efforts, usually weighted down by the convolutions of their continued plot and lacking the directness and vigour of the Hitchcock and Castle movies.

Back in the States, director Robert Aldrich seems to have had to himself. "Was it realistic, what if there really had been a crazy old Mrs Bates knocking off those people?" The result was a very successful *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* (1962), which presented former Hollywood queens Bette Davis and Joan Crawford in a new and distinctly unfilming light as a pair of aging Hollywood grotesques gradually succumbing to madness and murder. The resulting "grotesque" becomes a godsend to producers as this could resurrect the big name female stars of yesteryear as alternative actresses, the市场 looks of the former because lending the films an undeniably grotesque quality.

After scripting a relatively unsuccessful psychopath movie, *The Coach* (1963), Robert Bloch joined forces with William Castle and came up with *Jezebel*.



Top and middle: Scenes from *Peeping Tom*, the classic movie by the gory under-rated British director Michael Powell (see first article by art editorinchief of *Bizarre* 13, Melville French and Coppola).

AND THE SPURS GO ON IN AMERICA... AND THE CANNIBAL SPOTS... AND THE 1960'S TERROR OF CANNIBAL HAMMERS...

THIS ALL SORT OF THE PUNK AND ROCK AND ROLL SPOT AS THE PERVERSION AND THIS TOO TO HAMMER YOUNG AND HORRIFIED DOWNTOWN OF...



— BRIAN JONES (see BIZARRE 13, 1963)

vehicle, *Berserker-Jacket* (1962). This is the one where she plays a supposedly rehabilitated sex-maniac who comes to live with her daughter and promptly starts finding severed heads in the bed. The following year Bloch wrote and Castle directed another "Is she imagining all this or is it really happening?" entry, *The Nightwalker*, with a well-preserved Barbara Stanwyck. The same year Bette Davis played good and evil twin in *Blood Ring*, a Bally Jarre venture.

Not to be outdone, Hammer cast Davies in *The Penny* (1963) and recruited another veteran actress, Tippi Hedren, for *Parasite* (1963). Based on Anne Bancroft's novel *Nightmare Known in the U.S. as *Das Das, My Darling**, *Parasite* scripted by Richard Matheson, was one of the best of the serial psychopath movies as well as the first to be shot in colour. The plot was a switch on *Psycho* along the lines of "What if this Hammer who died and his Bates who was still alive?" Young Stephene Powers comes to Bates to pay her respects to the mother of her accidentally deceased boyfriend. At first welcoming, Mrs. Trefoil (Hedren) soon reveals herself as a religious nut and then a homicidal maniac with no intention of letting Stephene leave the place alive.

The man who had started the mess and add less cycle, Robert Aldrich, got back into the game with another Bette Davis vehicle *Blast, Hatch, Scream* (*Charlotte* 1964). A disappearing act long lost of Southern-Hed Gothic entwined only by a couple of decapitations. More heads rolled in *Dementia 13* (GB: *The Haunted and the Haunted*) (1963), made in Ireland by a young Roger Corman protégé called Francis Ford Coppola, and in *Night Must Fall* (1964) Albert Finney dropped his Angry Young Man image to play a Charming Young Asia Minorist travelling around with a hat box containing... well nothing you would fancy wearing even as Asgard. While in *Two on a Guillotine* (1962) Cesare Romano was a mad magician whose freakout trick required a rapid turnover of assistants. These must have been more decapitations (albeit only screen ones) in the early naughties than at any time since the French Revolution! Interestingly, decapitation had been the fate suffered by the James Leigh character in *Bloch's Psycho*, but Hitchcock had insisted that in the film as being too extreme. Which shows how audience sensibilities have changed in just a few short years.

Still in 1968 up-and-coming director Roman Polanski provided a welcome change from all these maniacal grottoes with a beautiful young female psychopath in the shape of Catherine Deneuve as *Repulsion*. Polanski and his screenwriter Gerald Schoenfeld cleverly supplied their lead character with a series of violent hallucinations so they're able to simulate a case history research with sudden William Castle-style shocks (On

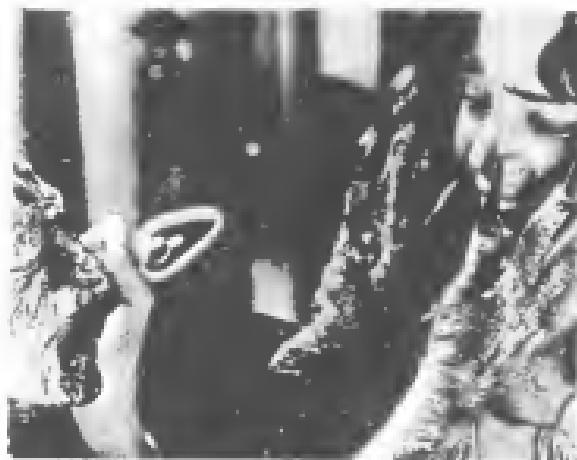
the strength of *Repulsion*, Polanski was later chosen to direct *Reservoir's Baby*, produced by Costa. I Repulsion proved highly influential in its own right and in the meantime was followed by two virtual sequels: *Whispers of Fear* and *Synopsis*.

The year following *Repulsion*, Milton Subotsky's London-based Amicus Films finally jumped on the psychological horror bandwagon with *The Psychopath*. Though written by Bloch and directed in stylish colour by Fredrich France, the plot heavy who-dunited about a killer who leaves a doll beside the bodies of his victims seemed closer in spirit to an off-flecked Edgar Wallace murder mystery than to modern terror movies such as *Psycho* and *Repulsion*. Commercially this was perhaps not such a bad approach as throughout the series, films based on mysteries by Edgar Wallace or his son, Bryan Edgar Wallace, proved immensely popular in Europe especially Italy and Germany. (Fredrich France had directed an Anglo-German Wallace movie, *Treasure's Gate* with Klaus Kinski, in 1966.) German productions based on Wallace stories generally involved weird criminal motives or hooded psychokillers peeling an eternally fogbound London that was as authentic as Hollywood's idea of Switzerland. (Sample titles: *The Phantom of Soho* (1960), *The Hunchback of Soho* (1962) and *The Soho Ripper* (1970).) As the German films ran out of steam and popularity, Italian filmmakers began to make their own rival murder mysteries (sometimes passed off by distributors as Wallace adaptations) amputating those elements that appealed to them most, namely the sex and violence. These colourful muscle chasers, known as gatti, were to become an enduring genre of Italian popular cinema. A typical gatto is a who-dunited in which the bare-chested heroine is up against an apparently disarmed killer, usually masked and often wearing leather gloves (so you can't deduce the killer's sex), who stalks and employs a succession of victims, mostly gorgeous young women. The actual murders are invariably violent, very gory, and usually shot with a great deal of cinematic flair reinforced by manic film-cutting and a musical soundtrack of almost operatic lewdness. A gatto without its murders would be like a spaghetti western without gunfights.

The first gatti to have any impact outside Italy seems to have been Mario Bava's *Red Woman for the Masters* (1964) which had some success in the U.S. and Great Britain under the more directly suggestive title *Blissful and Black Lace*. Starring Camaró Mitchell, the film concerns a masked killer cutting a swathe through the beautiful models of a Roma fashion house. A former cinematographer, Bava also made films in other genres but was to return several times to the theme of the psycho-killer with such films as *A Hatchet for a Henpecked*,



Top: Catherine Deneuve  
haunted by her own fears in  
*Repulsion*.  
Below: Karl Boehm killed  
by his camera  
Another scene from  
*Peeping Tom*.



**Top:** Jessica Harper  
as Suspiria struggling  
with an incubation  
of her son. **Right:**  
One of the  
many frightening  
moments from the  
Jessica Harper in  
**Suspiria.** Below:  
Argento's classic  
**Deep Red**  
(Pier Paolo  
(Pozzolo) was recently  
remastered in  
**Suspiria 2**



[1981]. *Twins of the Death Nexus* (1982) and *Shock*. Since Suspiria's success, his directorial output has displayed a similar penchant for the macabre. His latest project being *The House with the Dark Stairs* [ ]

As well as a son to carry on the family tradition, Bev also has a son, a young man named Dario Argento. After starting out as a writer of spaghetti westerns, Argento wrote and directed *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* (1970), a very successful pic about an American writer in Rome who runs out in search of a brutal killer. *Cat O'Millie Balla* (1971) and *Pier Pisa de Grey Velvet* (1972) were in similar vein. Bev's influence is apparent not just in the gory set-pieces and choice of subject matter but in the fluid camera work and expressive/surreal use of colour and sets (Argento cites Fritz Lang as another major influence). In *Deep Red* (1975) Argento introduced an element of the supernatural in the person of a stage medium while elsewhere there is a murderer in the audience and thereby precipitates her own death. Witchcraft played an important part in Argento's best film to date, *Suspiria* (1977) which has been followed by *Inferno* (1981) and his current Italian hit *Splatter* (1982). Like Hitchcock, Argento likes making personal appearances at his films. Apparently whenever there's a gore-murder to be filmed it's Argento's own slimy hands that do the stabbing and throttling off. Hard to imagine Sir Alfred watching up to the shoving curtain and taking a shite! Janet Leigh!

The gialli of the sixties and seventies may have been steer's breath of their Hollywood counterparts when it came to explicit gore and violence, but they were pale, derivative imitations compared to the products of the American "hard-gore" filmmakers who became active in the early sixties. Generally low-budgets, the gialli were poorer films, technically accomplished endotherms using imported American names like John Saxon and Cameron Mitchell. The hard-gore movies, on the other hand, were amateurish "backyard" cheapies on a par with the crooked porno firms and often made by the same kind of maverick independent producers. Most influential of these is Haskell Wexler, known to postivity as the "King of Gore". A former English teacher at an American university, Wexler had been a promising producer of early "adult" films before initiating the hard-gore genre with *Blood Feast* (1963) ("The Rubber Young Victims Slaughtered Out Their Life Blood As He Prepared The Most Horrible Of All Feasts")

Wexler's early partner David P Friedman, has claimed that he got the idea for the film following a visit to the now-defunct Grand Guignol theatre in Paris - a theatre specializing in short horror plays featuring nauseatingly convincing on-



# DARIO ARGENTO'S SUSPIRIA 2

magic tortures, operations and assassinations. Lewis' version of how Blood Feast came into existence is simply that the movie market was becoming saturated and he realised he had to get into a new area of exploitation filmmaking where he would be safe from competition from the studios. Having tried to turn people on with his nuttiness, he next resolved to turn them into morscha.

Blood Feast concerns the attempts by an ageing exorcist to bring to life an ancient Egyptian goddess by reanimating a new body for her from bits and pieces removed from various girls he murders. In one scene he removes a girl's brain. In another, he reaches into a victim's mouth and rips out her tongue! Lewis' make-up effects were rough and ready to say the least and depended more on what he could scrounge from the local slaughterhouses than on the ingenuity of a Rick Baker or Tom Savini. For the hang-dripping scenes, Lewis later revealed, a complete sheath of tongue, liberally doused with raspberry sauce, and enthusiasm to disguise the fact that it was just its prime, was stuffed into the mouth of the actress concerned. The whole film was shot in only six days for a budget of \$20,000, on the drive-in circuit, its vertiginous notoriety ensured a return in excess of a million dollars.

As Blood Feast's biggest audience proved to be in the rural South, Lewis tailored his second gore movie, 2,000 Maniacs (1963), specifically for that market. A group of visitors from the North are lured into a small, Southern town celebrating the Civil War 'bananarama', one by one, they're murdered by the townspeople in various elaborate and messy ways. There's a mild SF twist in the tale when the two remaining survivors manage to alert the state police, only to be informed that the town no longer exists, the entire population having been massacred by Northern troops a century earlier.

One interesting aspect of 2,000 Maniacs is the way it anticipates the more later horror movies (Texas Chainsaw Massacre, The Hills Have Eyes, Just Before Dawn) and where a group of unsuspecting strangers, usually the devils, intrude on a backwoods community, only to discover that the natives are anything but friendly.

Lewis' continue making his inevitable brand of hard gore movies into the early seventies. Colour Me Blood Red (1965) was about a mad painter who discovers that blood (other people's) provides just the right shade of red he needs. A Taste of Blood (1967) ("A Ghouly Tale Drenched with Gouts of Blood Spilling from the Windings, Incense of a Mattoom's Lust") can't accuse a modern campaturity. The Ghoussas Twosome (1968) was about a plump old lady who persuades her moronic son to give her egg-making business a boost by scalping young women. (This they have imagined.) Wilber-



Top: A ghouly giallo killer from Argento's *Four Flies on Grey Velvet*. Below: Another nightmarish moment from *Bugzilla*.



Luhring's recent much-needed *Messier* (1981) in which Joe Spinell displays similar notoriety-inclinations.

The *House of Gore* (1970) seems to be a tip of the hat to good gorefest with its story of Montag the Magician whose stage act consists of him sawing up female volunteers (they don't suffer any ill effects until a few hours later when the trick fails again - literally!) This too seems to have provided the inspiration for a later movie, José Riedel's subby-titled *Bloodsucking Freaks* (first released in 1970 as *The Incredible Torture Show*) which catalogues the grisly misdeeds of both the Magician and his Thaumaturgus Macabre.

But the 'King of Gore' had his imitators - or at least competing rivals - long before Bloodsucking Freaks. David Graham's *The Undertaker and His Pals* (1967) was gore version on the Sawdust Todd story - as was Andy Milligan's *Bloodthirsty Butchers* (a decade years later). Milligan reportedly had directed, written, produced and photographed no less than twenty-three shooting fiascos, many of them poor movies like *The Gory Gross* (1968), in a ten year span.

Another out-of-gore merchant deserving of an immediate MTT award was Wesley Dennis Sheldren, director and star of the legendary *Teenage Psycho meets Bloody Mary* (also known as *Horribly Strange Creatures who Stopped Living and became Mixed-Up Zombies* (1962) and *The Monsters are Loose!* (1966), the latter about a gang of escaped psychos at large, an old favourite device that turned up again recently in Jack Sheldren's *Aliens in the Dark* (1982).

H.G. Lewis' last gore movie was *The Gore-Gore Girls* (1972) about a killer stalks the girls in a strip joint which sound like an ideal place for a profit! Lewis had gotten into gore in the first place because it was the one area where he felt safe from competition from Hollywood. But since 1968 a dramatic revolution had been taking place in the film industry, with a succession of controversial but successful films establishing new standards of screen realism (the *screen rockers*) and dragging Hollywood further and further down the path hewn (beaten?) by Lewis and his compatriots.

Television played a major part of the revolution. Studio executives were finally beginning to wake up to the fact that people were no longer prepared to pay to see what they could watch at home for free. Filmabasto showcases, gothic art go out of business. Then there was the new generation of writers and directors, all sugar toshers that they were more hip, more dandy than the Hollywood Old Guard. But probably the most significant factor was America's involvement in the Vietnam War. Young American servicemen who experienced the war first-hand, and lived to return home to tell about it, could no longer tolerate the old Hollywood realism where bullets often didn't

makeistry holes, let alone soft holes, and where characters can't make long-term speeches because having just been hit by an arrow will still be an option in *The Polk's Back Home*. Followed the year after the film every night on TV were getting an idea of what violence looks like too. And the war provided filmmakers with a pretty good — if not always convincing — excuse for putting blood and gore on the screen. Anytime they were accused of showing gratuitous violence, all they had to do was invoke something about it symbolizing the war and that seemed to make it all right. Who could object to a little screenetchup when people were dying in a real shooting war?

The opening shots of the screen violence revolution were probably fired in *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), and the start-pain of spaghetti westerns that followed it. The following year *Mondo Cane*, a massive pan-rope with *Beasts and Clyde* and its bloody shoot-outs, 1968 was a bumper year for breakthrough movies. Hollywood and William Castle produced *Brammer's Baby* — but Pittsburgh and George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* shot cheaply in black and white in a documentary style, this iconic classic was able to get away with things that a larger-budgeted colour production probably wouldn't have dared attempt. *NLWD* didn't get a proper release but nevertheless went to have a steady and pervasive influence as a cult item on the campus and late-night circuits. Above all, it showed aspiring filmmakers that you could make films on minuscule budgets and without stars and still make a heap of money and critical rep.

Meanwhile, in England, young Michael Reeves was making himself a reputation that he didn't live to enjoy with *Whitelander* (1968) (U.S. *Carnage*), *Warred*, which kicked off a sub-genre of British splatter movies.

With *The Wild Bunch* (1969), Sam Peckinpah popularized the slow-motion death — all the better to see the blood spurt — while in another western *Border Days* (1969), Ralph Nelson showed the U.S. Cavalry holding up defencesless Indians (A Vietnam allegory, so he said). 1971 was a particularly harrowing year for filmmakers. Peckinpah devastated *Corralito in Bloodbath* (dir. Harry Partch) while *Venice Psycho* killed another Russell and *The Devil's Rides Again*. The same year Polanski surprised everyone by killing as his first film since a wife's murder by the Manson gang, a sado-masochistic version of *Macbeth* which ought to have reminded the jaded that dramatic representations of violence and sadism are not a diabolical invention of the movies in the Permissive Society but actually part of a long-established historical tradition going back as far, at least, as *Fistulaeth* and *Jacobean* revenge dramas — as the National

Theatre's current production of *Therese Reich's Spanish Tragedy* bears out.

The year H.G. Lewis gave up the gory, 1972, saw the release of two more Hollywood breakthrough movies — Robert Altman's *McCabe's Rain*, with its seamy, torture-loving Apaches standing in for the Wazungs, and John Carpenter's *Demonauts* in which murderous hillbillies served much the same purpose. Just as significant, if not as well-publicised, was the release of the \$50,000 film shot on 35mm with an amateur cast, *The Last House on the Left*. With a story ripped off from Ingmar Bergman's *The Virgin Spring*, *House* concerns a gang of psychos who waylay, torture and eventually kill two grisly hitchhikers. Later the killers end up in the hands of the parents of one of the girls. Realising the truth, the parents move (ineffit) yet appropriate retribution.

*Last House* is a hard-gore film with the certain dwelling almost gleefully on each torture and killing, relishing the dismembering of one of the victims. While the Lewis gore movies are partly redeemed by a comic sense of the ridiculous and a nudging wit that makes them (almost) passable, *House*'s enterprising director Wes Craven pursues a grimly doleful approach that gives full tilt at the entertainment value of a nasty car accident. (Craven has described the film as — yes — a Vietnam allegory!) Despite (or because of) its repulsiveness, *Last House* was sufficiently successful to stimulate a number of imitators such as *Don't Look in the Basement* (1973). *Hausu* (1977) however was no longer the freakshow curiosity that *Lewis* had made of it but a recognisable sub-genre of the horror movie — not exactly welcome, but tolerated.

In *Last House* a couple of the villagers get their comeuppance with a chainsaw — an image that won't now in general be the most successful of the independently-produced psycho movies. Tobe Hooper's *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) made with a student cast for a meagre \$20,000. *Chainsaw* loosely based on the true story of Wisconsin cannibal-murderer Ed Gein, whose weird oddities had provided the base for Bloch's *Psycho* novel. The steady erosion of literary and softcore taboos in the intervening years mean that Hooper could be more explicit about the nature of Gein's activities than was possible for Bloch or Hitchcock. Yet, despite the suggestiveness of the title there is remarkably little gore in *Chainsaw*. Hooper cleverly gets the audience's imagination working for him, making us anticipate the worst — something which is inevitably scarier than any amount of bullockish butchery. In this Hooper is greatly helped by the film's "homeword" Psycho may have been Hitchcock's last, party film but it seems over-plotted compared with *Chainsaw*. For Psycho's Girl on the Run with Steven Moore, Hooper



substitutes a veritable warload of rather mundane teenagers, who, through no fault of their own, enter the tyro's clutches. They simply show up and start getting beaten. Some, but oh-so-affectless, because they're all given equal weight, and none of them are guilty of anything like stealing a McGuffin (we don't know who's going to get gobbled, or when or how). Like the poster says: "Who will survive—and what will be left of them?" Now, of course, this approach has become rather over-familiar, but at the time of *Chainsaw*'s release, such plonkiness assumed almost experimental. It has proved an enduring model, while the film itself has spawned a host of imperfect clones, from the home-grown *Motel Hell* (1980) to Hong Kong's cheapo version *We Are Going to Eat You* (1980).

Curiously, the same year that Hooper made *Chainsaw*, a pair of young Canadians, Alan Ormsby and Bob Clark (future director of *Pariah*) were busy making their own-cut grisly version of the Ed Gorman story. *Demolition*, with another horror enthusiast, Tom Sizemore, assisting Ormsby with the make-up (Clark and Ormsby had previously made the Romano-inspired *Childish Suspects* with *Dead Things* (1973) and a horror movie about a vengeful Vietnam vet, *Dead at the Night* (aka *Bastardos*) (1973)). *Demolition* is a more accurate version of the Gorman story than *Psycho* or *Chainsaw*, but not without black humour in its account of the "Butcher of Woodstock" who stuffs his dominating mother's body when she dies, then goes hunting for further corpses to keep her company. Tobe Hooper also took a black humour approach to real-life murders with his follow-up to *Chainsaw*, *Evil Aliens* (aka *Bathhouse*) (1979) in which Neville Brand gives a wonderfully harrowing performance as a deranged inn keeper who needs his guests to live petrified after "condemned" him for alleged excessive violence. The film is, in fact, a rather restrained account of a Texas murderer called Joe Bell—the real Joe had not one but five hungry gourmets to feed!

Even a relatively successful independent movie like *Chainsaw* was inevitably overshadowed over as influential as such internationally successful Hollywood splatter movies as *The Exorcist* (1973) (green splatter) and *The Omen* (1976) which established the template for spectacular "creature disasters." By 1978 film industry analysts were predicting that the low-budget horror movies would

left top: Two scenes from *Night of the Living Dead* (George Romero), showing just part of the morning passenger sequence and Ted's confrontation with his shadowy son; middle: A typically ghoulish death from *Evil Aliens* (Tobe Hooper); right: *Carrie* (Sissy Spacek) and *Motel Hell* (Caren) *Night of the Living Dead*, and *The Hills Have Eyes*

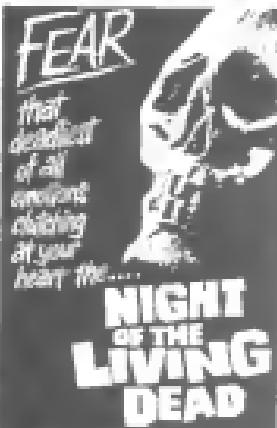


**IF YOU'VE GOT  
A TASTE FOR TERROR...  
TAKE CARRIE TO THE PARTY.**

# CARRIE

"Many things have the power..."

Directed by Brian de Palma



# THE HILLS HAVE EYES

A nice American family.

They didn't want  
to kill. But they  
didn't want  
to die.



soon be dead, unable to compete with lavish studio products such as *Carrie* (1976) or *Demons* (Orion 2 (1977)), then, just to prove them wrong, John Carpenter came up with *Halloween*, a smash hit classic whose unknown female lead just happened to be the daughter of Tom "The Boston Strangler" Clavin and Psycho's Janet Leigh. (You guessed it: Jamie Lee Curtis!)

The decision to make *Halloween* was probably taken in the wake of the surprise success of AIP's *The Town That Dreaded Sundown* (1976), an apparently true story about a masked killer at large in a Texas town. *Halloween* is also rather reminiscent of that other festive horror movie, Bob Clark's *Black Christmas* (aka *Santa High, Evil Night*) (1974). With its prowling cameras and masked killer with a knife, *Halloween* often comes across like an amateur, Protestant version of an Italian giallo. Hardly surprising, as Carpenter, a knowledgeable horror fan since he has had a sparsely-adenmed for *Evil* and *Argento*. Come to think of it, his accompaniment for *The Eyes of Laura Mere* (incredibly rewritten by others) is pretty much like *Evil's* *Wood* and *Black Lace* with a little ESP thrown in for good measure.

Whatever its influences, *Halloween* has become the most financially successful independently produced horror movie of all time, racking up \$300,000 over a hundred million plus. And thereby spawning a horde of stalk and slash teenagers in pantomimes. One theory attributes its huge success to the fact that it was almost entirely bloodless—a horror movie that wasn't "gory" and that you could take your girlfriend to without ruining a beautiful relationship. And then the following year came *Friday the 13th* (directed by Sean Cunningham, producer of *Last House on the Left* which was very gory indeed and made almost as much money as *Halloween* anyway).

Also in 1979 came *Alien* with its chemo-beast and white splatter. And George Romero's *Evil Aliens* (aka *Dead*) (C.B. Satellite, sequel to *Night of the Living Dead* with everything you ever wanted you couldn't make out in that movie and thanks to Tachikodai and Tom Savini's effects). Co-producer of *Zombie* was ... David Argento! Mind if I tell you hand-pushing that somewhere into the zombie's brain? The rest, as they say, is history—and like most history, it's been pretty bloody.

As we've seen, Hitchcock's *Psycho* undoubtedly was a landmark movie of lasting influence. But when it comes to handing out the credit (or blame) for liberating screen violence, let's not overlook the contributions made by the likes of *Hannibal* (George Cukor), *William Castle*, *H.G. Lewis*, *George Romero*, *Mario Bava*, *Sam Peckinpah* and *William Shakespear*.

# HORROR ON THE CHEAP

by Stephen Jones

In 1950 Alfred Hitchcock released his film version of the book *Psycho*, after more than 250 short stories and seven novels, Robert Bloch became an overnight success.

Bloch was born on April 16, 1917, in Chicago, Illinois. One of his great childhood passions was the silent cinema - "The magic instrument of the organs in such darkness, the floating fantasy of the film itself is how he later described it. Between 1924 and 1929 he saw hundreds of movies, at successive Saturday afternoons. But he believes he owes his interest in fantasy to one particular film of this period: in 1926, at the age of eight, he attended his first movie alone at night. The picture was *The Phantom of the Opera* starring Lon Chaney Sr., and as Bloch remembers, "It scared the living hell out of me and I ran all the way home to enjoy the first of about two years of recurrent nightmares."

Two years later Bloch discovered the pulp magazine *World Tales*, and particularly admired the cosmic horror stories of H.P. Lovecraft. In 1932 he wrote his first fan letter to Lovecraft, and the writer responded, encouraging further correspondence, until finally suggested Bloch writing his own stories. "Why he bothered with the rambling legions of a 16-year-old lad, I'll never know," Bloch said later. "But his kindness and interest got me started."

In 1934 Bloch began submitting his stories to the few publications with some success. Encouraged by some of his work to *World Tales*, and that same year, only a couple of months after his high school graduation, editor Farnsworth Wright bought his first professional story, "The Beast in the Abbey," appeared in the January 1935 *World Tales* and over the next 20 years Bloch's work was published by most of the major science fiction and fantasy pulps, as well as mystery tales and men's magazines like *Playboy* and *Regent*.

In 1948 he scripted 20 episodes of the radio horror show *Skin Game for Terror*, based on his own stories, and throughout the 1950s and '60s Bloch's output of horror fiction often centered with his own particular brand of "gallows humour", steadily grew.

1950 saw the publication of his most successful novel, *Psycho*. MCA, the agency representing Alfred Hitchcock, bought the film rights for only \$9,500; it went on to become the second-highest grossing black and white film ever made, earning millions for its director and Paramount Pictures. The screenplay, by Joseph Stefano who later produced and wrote many episodes of *The Outer Limits*, followed the novel very closely and Hitchcock later admitted, "*Psycho* all came from Robert Bloch's book. The screenwriter contributed dialogue only, no ideas."

But although he had little direct

involvement with the film, Bloch's subsequent career has always been linked with the success of Hitchcock's classic thriller.

By the time *Psycho* was released, Bloch had already moved to Los Angeles and had begun writing scripts for television and the movies. His TV credits include such regular series as *Up-Dat*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour*; *Sam Kinney Thriller*, *Star Trek*; *Hannibal's Journey into the Unknown*, *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* and two very fine made-for-TV movies: *The Cell Creatures* (1969) and *The Dead Don't Die* (1972).

During the early '80s he also wrote the screenplay for a number of low-budget horror movies: *The Couch* (1980), *The Cabinet of Colossal* (1981), and *William Castle's Shriek-It-Jacket* (1982) and *The Night Walker* (1984). But none of these films did his work full justice, and it was left to a small British company to attempt to film Bloch's stories with taste and intelligence.

About the same time that Hitchcock was making *Psycho*, two American producers, Miller Slobotsky and Max J. Rosenberg were in Britain making their first horror film for the princely sum of £48,000. *City of the Dead* (*Never Hotel* in the U.S.A.) was scripted by George Best and Subotsky and featured Christopher Lee. As Subotsky remembers, "What is interesting about the film is that it was structured like *Psycho*, but I wrote it before *Psycho*. We killed off the heroine and then had someone come in and investigate what happened to her. Bloch had done this in films as far as I know and we did it first."

The film was a moderate success, and soon after its release Rosenberg and Subotsky formed Amicus Productions and stayed in Britain to continue making more or less pictures.

Their second horror film, followed in 1964 *Dr Terror's House of Horrors* had an anthology format patterned after the classic British chiller *Child of Night* and co-starred Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee. The film made a lot of money and quickly established Amicus as a serious rival to Britain's other horror studio Hammer Film.

Subotsky started looking around for his next project, and when he read Robert Bloch's short story, *The Staff of the Marquis de Sade*, decided he could turn it into a film. "What I liked about it was that save we could do the last four reels without any dialogue," said Subotsky. He bought the film rights from Bloch and wrote the script himself. "My initial contact was with Max Rosenberg, the other half of the company," Bloch remembers, "though I corresponded with Peter concerning the material and met him in London on both my visits there, in 1963 and 1968."

It was filmed in 1968 as *The Staff*. Once again it re-united Cushing and Lee this

A triple-threat of author, actor and author Stephen Jones is one of the chief middle managers in the British fantasy world. Together with Dave Sutton he edited the much-acclaimed *Dragonlarks* and the multiple award-winning *Fantasy Tales*, a tribute to the golden age of *World Tales*. He also edits, with an *Illustrator*, the British Fantasy Society's publication in a style reminiscent of his own fantastical *Fantasy Media*, the annual compendium of fantasy films, travel, literary and fantasy comic book reviews. He has written numerous articles for a whole range of magazines in the UK, US and Europe.

time as a couple of collectors of occult objects who both want to own the skull of the notorious Marquis de Sade. But the skull still exerts a malignant supernatural influence, finally bringing death to all who own it... Although made on a low budget director Freddie Francis brought an originality and charm rarely seen in many sequences (only let down by the cheap-looking special effects) — a reassuring problem in most Amicus films, and the two stars were well supported by a cast that included Patrick Wymark, Nigel Green, Michael Cough, George Coulouris and Patrick Mower. The ending was particularly memorable with the final scene played through the eye-slots of the skull.

Bloch was happy with the adaptation and agreed to adapt Amicus' next horror film, *The Psychopath's Suburb*, and Ransford once again called on the services of director Freddie Francis and star Patrick Wymark for this low-key thriller based on Bloch's original unpublished story. Fear apparently unconnected men are brutally murdered. The only clue is a small skull left at the scene of each crime. According to Bloch, Subsolo and Francis' "removal" of the film with touches of their own. But the badly-handled incident and weak supporting cast (Margaret Johnson, John Standing, Alexander Korda) left it to Wymark's old fashioned Peter Harker Holloway to hold the film together. The critics were generally negative, but unfortunately the rest of the film didn't live up to the first sequence.

"Meeting London in 1965, I met Milton and Max for the first time and will eat to Shropshire until死 to see the shooting of the film," said Bloch. "I was then that I got my first impression of the enormous budgets under which Amicus laboured — a key scene which I'd written to be played suspense was instead played in a impulsive rush dressed in a basement because it saved the cost of an additional set and more elaborate cameras."

Bloch's next assignment for Amicus was an adaptation of H. P. Lovecraft's novel *A Thing of Evil*. He was delighted at the prospect. Not only did he have great admiration for the book, but he also envisaged an opportunity to re-write his old friends Boris Karloff and Christopher Lee in the same film. Accordingly, he wrote the ageing Karloff in the villain's role as a wheelchair invalid breeding a line of killer bats on a remote island. Lee's function as the more obvious suspect seemed ideal. "Again, the question of budget proved to hamper such casting," said Bloch — the roles were finally played by Herald Flory and Guy Doleman. When I was told that the director (Freddie Francis again) ordered a review while the producers were away and began shooting before the changes were played. True or false, the results distressed me being health rather to my script or M. H. Lovecraft's novel. Heard

certainly deserved better treatment, and perhaps I did too." Although made in early 1968, the film was finally released a year later as *The Dandy Bears* — and then with some scenes cut. The bear attack being much staged and bears were effectively handled and the picture did at least keep its audience from guessing the film's identity until the end.

But long before Bloch learned of the film's fate, he was already working on the first of three previous efforts he scripted for Amicus. Having lost to the successful format of *Dr. Terror's House of Horrors*, Subsolo decided to continue four of Bloch's most famous tales: *Flesh*, *Terror Over Hollywood*, *Mr. Starmore*, and *The Man Who Collected Poe*. "My relationship was actually a very simple one," said Bloch. "Milton would come up with a suggested treatment of a Farnie story and in some cases indicate which of my published short stories he'd prefer me to adapt for the individual sequences in the script. Then I'd do the whole thing, name and all, and send it along." In *Terror Over Hollywood* (1969), five visitors to a carnival are doused by the seedy Dr. Octobolo (Burgess Meredith) to either make parrots and glimpse what the future holds for them. Michael Bryant has his hand eaten by a wolf's cat, Robert Hutton is a Hollywood star whose screen longevity is due to the fact that he is a robot. John Standing plays a pianist whose piano piano parties his guitars out the window, and Jack Palance discovers that Peter Cushing has brought Edgar Allan Poe back to life. They only did 60 or 70 per cent of what I had written," complained Bloch. However, a bigger budget, better than usual direction by Freddie Francis and a star cast resulted in an enjoyable chiller. In America, people were enticed into the cinema with the offer of a free packet of Pepto Bismol to grow their own *Terror Over Hollywood*.

Bloch was soon back working with Amicus again and *The House That Dripped Blood* (1970) became the company's most critically acclaimed movie. Subsolo had wanted to make a horror film for younger audiences, but the distributor insisted on the British Censor giving the film an "X" certificate. Once again Bloch adapted four of his short stories: "Matched for Murder," "The Living End," "Sweeties to the Sweet" and "The Clasp," around the framework of an old house in the country. When Paul Henderson (Leslie Parnell) one of Britain's foremost horror film stars disappears, Inspector Holloway (the man played by John Bennett) investigates. Blocky, the title agent, analyses the tragic history of the building's inhabitants. Dennis Hopper plays a neurotic writer whose character (Tom Adams) comes to life. Peter Cushing is obsessed with the Square of Solomé in a run-down local framework, a strict father (John Leeson) who's young daughter



Above: Peter Cushing stars as Inspector Holloway in the classic British horror film *The House That Dripped Blood* (1970). Below: Christopher Lee in *The Man Who Collected Poe*.





Top: John Peter as a nervous shop owner in "Managed by Friends." Legend Pitt is steadily poised in "The House that Dripped Blood." Below: Peter Cushing's transformation by a mysterious visitor in "Aykham" (1972). Bottom: Peter Cushing as a mysterious stranger in "Aykham." Right: Director Roger Corman.



preacher's withdrawal on him, and Peterman's vain wife can visit an antique shop and buys an old clock that belonged to Count Dracula himself! The film ends with Holloway investigating the basement of the house where he is attacked by Herderson and has leading lady Linda Pini new both real vampires.

Director Peter Delall brings an atmospheric and moody feel to each of the stories, and the final tongue-in-cheek vampire episode is a personal favorite of Botham and Bloch (which the latter believes actually originated upon his word).

But Bloch is probably most satisfied with his last project for Amicus, *Aykham* (made in 1972). Thereafter remembered as the among-then-usual-fun story was "developed and submitted to me in a treatment by Milton, using a published short story of mine as its basis. Within those three pages of my published work for the main storyline and I wrote the script from that material. One of the stories we agreed upon was a gallows-humorous piece, on completion Milton felt it was out of place, and I substituted another segment instead." The linking story ("Matriarchs of Horror") concerns Dr Martin, played by Robert Powell, who arrives to take up a new post at a remote asylum. There he is greeted by Dr Richardson (Patrick Magee) who informs him that the head of the institute, Dr Stern, is now insane and one of the patients. As a test of his capabilities, Martin must interview four patients and decide which is Dr Stern. They learn the changes to Bloch's script. The "Trojan Horse" segment which he had placed third because the story would better serve if this horrific episode came along after the audience had been "warmed up" properly in advance, was now first. Richard Todd (myself and then director) was with Colleen Synge) during the pieces in a Fraser. But when his girlfriend (Barbara Parkes) arrives, she discovers her lover strangled and is subsequently pursued by the neatly wrapped packages containing bits of the body.

In the next episode, "The Wizard Tailor," Barry Morse portrays a poor tailor who is commissioned by a mysterious stranger (Peter Cushing) to make a magic suit that will reveal the dead Bloch managed that his original story and script, which featured a decidedly nasty character in the title-role, was rewritten so the character changed into what Freudian psychologists describe, in technical terms, as a poor epipole! Moreover, the sequence—which he wrote in as the first episode—was now switched around so that it became the third.

"Lucy Comes to Stay" is a reasonably effective tale of psychological horror in which Barbara (Charlotte Rampling) is visited by her friend Lucy (Bett Davis) to tell her the truth is that Lucy doesn't have. Finally, Martin meets Byron (Herbert

Lom) who believes he was once a doctor. He claims that the madman figure he has created is alive and through him he will revenge himself on those who persecuted him. As the young doctor prepares to leave, confident that he now knows the identity of Dr Stern, he discovers that the conclusions are horrifically wrong. In this final episode, Bloch declared: "Figures of clay, perfectly-articulated miniature human forms which would be designed and animated by someone like my friend Ray Harryhausen. Also for good interviews—and a bad budget! What you see upon the screen is what I got. Time and money dictated the necessity of this compromise, not human error in judgement. But the result, I submit, wasn't what I intended."

Overall, *Aykham* is the most polished of the Bloch and Amicus collaborations,



thanks to the sure hand of director Roy Ward Baker and the usual fine cast and excellent production values.

"As for *Aykham*," said Bloch, "I can only claim credit—or blame—for these portions of the film which were shot in accordance with my script... Considering the handicaps and limitations under which they worked, the producers, director, cast and production people deserve full marks and I can only be grateful for their efforts. As far myself, I'm satisfied with those portions of the film—'Lucy Comes to Stay' and 'House Fier'—which were shot simply as I'd written them, dialogue, action and camerawork. For better or worse they serve as examples of how preferable to see my stories translated to film."

By the mid-1970s the horror boom was coming to an end and Amicus and old-boy Hammer stopped making pictures at

about the same time Rosenberg and Subotsky simultaneously quit up - the latter by still produce the occasional fantasy film Bloch continued writing up songs, short stories and novels. In 1981 Pepple has his sequel to the most famous song, finally reappeared, but history repeated itself and Bloch had no connection whatsoever with the University and City of the same name.

Nowadays Black still looks back on his six year association with America with a mixture of pleasure and regret. "Mexico is an example of a revolution without a California, but he remained clear of the so-called native experts and certainly used no financing and paid nothing. Again, there were times when certain sequences I wrote were disapproved by the leaders and a few occasions when - as I have said - an editor or a director would compliment my work, but looking back upon the experience, I wonder if Max wouldn't have been wiser to hold out for better deals or no deals at all." He said.

"Like Milton he's a highly intelligent man, and I think his mistake was to pessimistically believe that he must cater to the masses. Granted, the *New Times* were no resounding hit all got excellent reviews and one (*August*) received first prize at a European festival of literary films. But Max, very much like William Castle before he made *Possessing a Baby*, was a victim of the system. The industry seems to have more respect for a filmmaker who squanders his vision on a small loss than for one who spends two hundred thousand and brings in a small profit. The only way the letter can be regarded as a hit is when it brings in the pictures but not much money. Max gets into the pattern, and begins to look upon it as his own effort. Totalitarian films tend to bear titles like *The House That Dripped Blood* which should be good for *Tartuffe* Garden Inc. torture...no garden! I suspect that reasonable research and a more measured estimating approach would have earned greater profits for *Murder* and the films.

"Certainly I've no regrets about my association with it at all. In the opening sequence of *Angels* I was very happy with what I saw up there on the screen. And having *Angels* performed by people like Clapton, Lee, Lorn, Marcella and Paloma is always exciting to a writer."

# BLOCH AT AMICUS

## The Director

Peter Courtney (as Professor Christopher Blackwell)  
Christopher Lee (as Sir Fletcher Fluckett)  
Patrick Wymark (as Major Jim Bennett) as *uncredited*  
Roy Green (as Maxon) Michael Cough (as  
dame) *uncredited*

Dr. Walter Brinton and Miss J. Newmeyer, Dr.  
Franklin French \$50 Million Bazaar from the  
play, *The Devil Is An Alibi*, by S. S. Kander  
and H. Jackson Weiss, Dr. Oswald Unterholzer,  
M. (Eduard Lohman)

The Encyclopedia of Music

Franco Kymack (as Francois) (Hoffmann)  
Margaret Johnson (as Mrs. Lucy) (as George) (John  
Stanford (as Mr. Ward) (as David) (Angela)  
Kris Alm (as Mrs. Seaville) (as Mrs. Bunting)  
Liz Jones (as Mrs. Bunting) (as Mrs. Bunting)  
Kerri Lee (as Mrs. Bunting) (as Mrs. Bunting)  
Peter Weller (as Mr. Bunting) (as Mr. Bunting)  
John Goodman (as Mr. Bunting) (as Mr. Bunting)  
John Michael Higgins (as Mr. Bunting) (as Mr. Bunting)

The Deafie Boys (1968)  
Bassoon: Doug (aka Mike) Riedman, French  
Horn: Jim (aka Jimbo), Bassoon: Dan  
McGregor, Cello: Jim (aka Jimbo) Morgan, Alto  
Saxophone: John Harvey, Tenor Saxophone:  
John Harrelson, Baritone Saxophone: Michael  
Papenfuss, Trombone: Jim (aka Jimbo) Morgan,  
Drums: Doug (aka Mike) Riedman

[View more details](#)

— 1 —

Jack Palance (as General Blaauw), Margaretha Malmström (as Professor Sophie Adlers) as Carla August, Michael Rapaport (as Dr. Eric Wohlman), John Goodman (as Alan Peter Cushing) as Chairman Robert Walker (as Fred Barbara (as Dorothy Fosdick), Michael Pappas (as Doctor Valderril), and David Bevan

Paul B. J. Rosenberg and William Guttmann  
Dr. Freddie Franklin for Robert Black from  
the Atlanta Jewish Times *not reproduced*,  
Mr. Segaloff\* and Paul Mann who assisted  
Paul Dr. Norman Wissner, Ed. Peter Elliot,  
Doris and Barbara and Charles Kornfeld  
*Amherst 22-23*

www.nature.com/scientificreports/ | (2022) 12:1030 | Article number: 1030

The House will adjourn Monday at noon.  
John Barnett (as Inspector Amherst), John  
Bryant (as Doctor), John MacLean (as Police  
Inspector Chisholm), Charles Clapperton (as  
Jeanne D'Arcy (as Alice), Tom Adair (as  
Dowager), Robert Lang (as Psychiatrist), Peter  
Rutherford (as Philip Chapman), Jean Arthur (as  
Margaret), Dorothy Draper (as Madame  
Progression), Christopher Lee (as Doctor Ward),  
Myra Smart (as Mrs. Ann), Glynis Johns (as  
Alice), Jim Parsons (as Paul), Michael Caine

**Franklin** *Franklin* **Franklin** **Franklin** **Franklin**  
Franklin **Franklin** **Franklin** **Franklin** **Franklin**  
**Franklin** **Franklin** **Franklin** **Franklin** **Franklin**

*Analyst* (1999) 124(12) responses to *Review of*  
*Parasitology*

**Obituaries**  
Angry Major has Dr. Ruthiehard Retired  
Pensioner Dr. Martin Geoffrey Bryant has  
Max Raymond Barbara Parker in Silver  
Sobieski 81½ in April. Richard Todd has  
Stanley Peter Coulthard Dr. Donald R. McNamee  
in British Ann Hopkins has Arnold John  
Ferguson Anderson has Elizabeth Ann Elizabeth  
Ann Lord. Guyana Remapping has Andrew  
James Williams has Brought Major Jenkins has  
Ruthiehard Barbara Parker in Dr. Rosen.

Post War Repercussions  
by Ray Ward Baker (see Robert Benchley  
in *Theatrical Review*) Post-War Period  
Lucky Gorman In "Easy" and "Widowmen of  
Money" (see David O'Gorman) (see Peter Tassan  
May, Cleveland Playhouse)

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# **NEXT ISSUE: MASTERS OF MAYHEM**

# AT THE MONSTER CLUB

Take a look at *HeH*, with a healthy dose of Milton Subotsky, a graduate of USC and a fan of the annual Cannes Film festival, and the new product (with four weeks to mature) is a truly producer/marketing tool. *The Monster Club* comic magazine.

Thanks to the British fan press, many have heard of the remarkably accurate comic strip adaptation of *The Monster Club* but few have seen it. At recent conventions, the highly sought-after 32-page comic book sold in auctioneer prices as high as £10.

Arriving Hall's of Hauer seems to be a perfect place to make the piece of relief available to more than the 1900 recipients of the original.

Thanks to Quality Communications (then *Promax Press*) selling their rights only to Alternative ITC, we are able to reprise the strip aimed this issue and this issue!

**F**ebruary, 1980 proved to be an interesting month for John Bolton and myself. I had just completed my two-month contractual term as Marvel's editorial director, and now faced with the renewal of an exclusive arrangement, was ready to take up any new challenge.

Within a week, film producer/director Milton Subotsky, who had recommended the only serious bid to Hammer Films in the shape of the Amicus company, telephoned me with an interesting proposition.

Milton had been aware of our magazine *House of Hammer*, and while he realised we could hardly adorn an Amicus production under the Hammer banner, he saw the potential of coming up with versions of films.

At that time, Milton had reached an agreement with Lord (see *Quesa's* ITC Entertainment company to produce a film based on R. Schuyler Heyer's collection of short stories, *The Monster Club*.

Unfortunately, while the film had been partially cast, with leads Vincent Price, John Carradine and Donald Pleasence, there was little time to prepare any promotional (buffet) material for the forthcoming Cannes Film Festival.

Had there been more time, the investment would have been formidable to produce any kind of promotional reel, stills, and brochures with actual scenes from the film. Seeing this as an ideal time to combine forces with the Hammer, Milton got the go-ahead to have a comic strip version of the film produced.

Our brief was to do the opposite of our usual *HeH* adaptation, instead of taking an

existing film, its set design, makeup, costumes and locations and adapting that image to a comic strip version. No script to work from, no visuals had yet been produced.

David Jackson, who had adapted several films for Hall, and is currently producing *Another Stakeout* for Miramax, was approached to handle the black-and-white interior, and John Bolton agreed to paint the comic's exterior and cover (reproduced in our expanded poster this issue).

However, what ultimately transpired was John taking on the total art role with the exception of four pages which David (if for *Miramax*) Lloyd helped out with, as the classical-trained painter.

Unlike the usual adaptation wherein the basic strengths which convert to comic-strip form are emphasized and the non-verbal side played down, *The Monster Club* presented a different kind of challenge as a comic. Everything had to be included. Ninety minutes of film in twenty-five pages hints of the luxury of the Marvel-style monthly-five page, three-issue adaptation.

The benefits of such an art-product proved to be multiple. Not only could a foreign distributor take the total image of the film back to his own country, but, because of its easy format (and five-language synopsis translation across the last two pages) he would actually be able to "read" the film visually.

Mak-up genius Roy Ashton, who had been responsible for the greater part of Hammer's visual effects during their heyday, was highly complimentary about the weird, ghastly and shadowed visualizations John Bolton had produced for the comic, to the extent of admitting being influenced by them when working on the finished film.

Obviously he wasn't the only one. For a particular sequence in the "Lougville" segment of the film, John was commissioned to produce seven eight illustrations, which were used with a voiceover for a flashback sequence.

John also produced a large full-colour version of the monster genealogical chart for use in the film (as mentioned in the fourth page of our adaptation). This chronologically proved popular with the film's cast or crew too, as it mysteriously disappeared after the final day's shooting.

Despite a restrictive budget and shooting schedule, Milton managed to get the film in the can on time complete with a soundtrack featuring B.A. Robertson and *The Party Thing* which made Paul Williams' excellent work for *Phantom of the Paradise*.

Apparently no American distribution has yet been agreed upon for *The Monster Club* so, perhaps through our American sales of this magazine we can rectify that situation.

See Steve, other than being publisher of the magazine, has been one of the more consultative characters in literary and comic publications over the last fifteen years. His writing accolades have been with both comic magazines (including *HeH*, *Golden Man*, *Transcendental Comics*, *Starburst*, *2000 AD*, *Heavy Metal*, *Warren*, *Wheeler*, *Star Wars Weekly*, *Starlord*, *TVHorror*, etc.) from the British comic press. He has also run Quality Communications, a company which both publishes and merchandises comic strips and comic strips with the particular emphasis...

## Members & Guests



IN THE CLUB  
CRAMPS will be played by  
VINCENT PRICE  
R. CRUMB AND HAYES will be  
JOHN CARRADINE

IN THE FIRST STORY  
ANGELA will be BARBARA KELLERMAN, RAVEN will be JAMES LAURENCE  
and GEORGE will be SIMON WARD



IN THE SECOND STORY  
SAM will be STUART WATKINS, LUNA will be LESLEY DUNLOP  
and THE PUNK FEVER will be PATRICK WADDEE



IN THE THIRD STORY  
THE FATHER will be RICHARD JOHNSON, THE MOTHER will be BRITT EKLUND  
POWDERINO will be DONALD PLEASINGER and MODESTY will be ANTHONY VALENTINE









...MOUNTAINS IN THE CITY A TIME  
WHEN MOUNTAINS WOULD BE EATING...  
EATING... BUT NOT DRAMATIC, A  
DISASTER OF THE DANGEROUS  
ADVENTURE, WHO KNEW...



...fascinated...



RONALD RODALD, THE WORLDS  
EXPERIENCED PECULIAR-MECH  
A GHOST THAT HE PAINTED  
AND THE NEAREST THING HE  
KNEW...

SUMMIT?

I DID  
THINK YOU  
MIGHT HAVE  
A GHOST...

MAY I BE  
PERMITTED  
TO INTRODUCE  
YOU TO MY  
NAME IS  
RONALD. I'M  
A VAMPIRE.  
BUT OF COURSE  
YOU KNOW THAT.

I DON'T  
BITT DEEP  
— YOU DON'T  
SENCE ONE  
OF US!

MANHAWK,  
MEANWHILE, NOTICING THE  
ALARMS...

A CLOTHING  
MAVENS / AUTHOR OF THOSE  
MARVELOUS HOMESPUN  
SPECIALS.

WELL,  
YOU'RE MY  
FAVOURITE  
WOMAN!

YOU MUST LET ME SLEP  
TODAY. I CAN SHOW YOU  
MY SPECIAL POWS TOMORROW.  
RIGHT NOW — THE REAL  
TOMORROW, IT'S NEEDED TO  
HONEY, YOU'LL BE  
OUTTA SHAPE...

YOU HAVE  
ANY IDEAS...  
THE VIDEO  
OF A  
VAMPIRE!

AT THE MENTION OF THIS MATERIAL,  
RONALD FEELS HIS PESTLES INSTINCTIVELY  
TENSE CONTROLLED AND REACHES OVER  
LOOKING GLASS.

MATERIAL?  
WHAT KIND OF  
MATERIAL?

I WILL TAKE YOU TO  
A PLACE WHERE MY FRIENDS  
ALL HAVE UNQUOTE UNQUOTE UNQUOTE  
WHATEVER RODALD...

EVERYTHING YOU CAN  
IMAGINE! A HOT SHOWER AND  
EVERYTHING THAT IMAGINABLE! THERE  
YOU WILL DISCOVER EACH  
GALLERIE OF HOMESICKS THAT  
WILL CORRUPT YOUR SOUL  
AND FEEL THE BLOOD  
IN YOUR VEINS! ONLY A  
CANNIBAL WOLF WILL TAKE  
YOU TO...

SURELY  
THIS IS A  
TOUGH  
ATTRACTION.

IT'S VERY

ATTRACTIVE.

NOT  
REALLY...

ALL DAY  
THE VISION  
MY FRIEND  
IS PAYING

IN SPITE OF  
OPENING A LITTLE BOTTLE  
OF CHAMPAGNE AND A TOMATO JUICE  
WOULD MAKE YOUR "FRIEND"  
LOOK LESS CONFIDENTIAL.



AND, AS THE DAYTIME APPROVED...

THE IR-QUITE PLEASANT,  
BUT DON'T LET IR-QUITE GETTING THE IR-THING  
BECOME CONSIDERABLY  
MORE DIFFICULT...

PEOPLE ARE  
SO EDUCATED THESE  
DAYS, THROUGH T.V.  
AND HORROR FILMS.

EVERYBODY  
KNOWS ABOUT  
CHARLIE AND STANLEY  
THROUGH THE IR-  
TAKES ALL THE  
COULD BE A MAJOR  
PENALTY JUST TO  
CALL THE STREET!

KIRKWOOD, RONALD GLANCED ROUND ALMOST  
CRAZYLY TO KIRKWOOD'S AROUND THE U-10  
SPOTTER.

THAT'S QUITE  
BRIGHT, IS IT?

OH, THAT'S  
A LADISTER  
GENEALOGICAL  
CHART.

STANLEY SHOWED AND NAMED  
MANY STRANGE PUNK FAMILIES...  
AND EXCLUDED WHAT THEY  
DID...

CHARLIE

IT'S QUITE  
SIMPLE, CHARLIE.  
ALL YOU HAVE TO  
REMEMBER ARE  
THE BASIC RULES  
OF  
MONSTERDOM.

CHARLIE, STANLEY  
EXPLAINED. NOT WAITING  
TO DRAW ATTENTION TO  
HIS CONVERSATION, HE  
CONTINUED...

VAMPIRES ARE  
WEIRD-WOLVES, HUMPS,  
GHOULS, THUGS, GHOULS, ETC.,  
MUSCLES, BRAINS,  
MUCK, BALLOON, BUT  
STANLEY'S ONLY  
WITH IT.

WHILE IT THAT  
DON'T SOUND  
TOO  
TERREIFYING?

OH, BUT IT  
ISN'T HARD  
ON A MAN WHO  
HAS SEEN  
THE RESULTS OF  
A GHOULOW-GHOUL  
WRESTLE...

SUCH THE  
RESULTS...

AND  
YET...

BECOULD A YOUNG MAN WHO HAD WITHHELD  
TERRORS FOR SIX MONTHS HIS BRAIN TRIED  
TO CONTROL THAT WHICH HIS MEMORY COULD  
NOT ERASE. HIS LONG CATALYTIC TREACHERY  
BECOME SPLIT WITH PERIODS OF UNCONTROLL  
JAMES GLODE



A MEMORY OF A TIME WHEN HE HAD ONLY WANTED  
ONE THING... MONEY! QUICKLY, AND BY ANY  
MEANS NECESSARY!

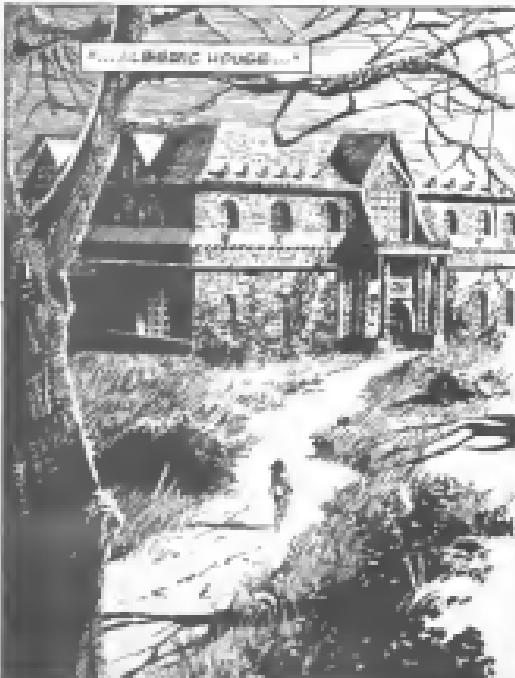
MAYBE WE COULD TO  
LOOK FOR REAL GOLD  
GEMS?

AND THE SELLERS  
TO THEM ALL ONE  
LIVED IN WEST  
MOUNTAIN AFFORD  
TO SELL  
MATERIAL...

HAVING  
SOMETHING  
ANTIQUE  
BROKEN  
ACCIDENTLY TO  
CHALLENGE HIS  
COLLECTION...

SOME OF THESE OLD  
COINS HAVE OVER  
WORTH THOUSANDS  
GOLD -- MELTED  
DOWN -- UNNECESSARILY!

WE'RE OFFERING  
LARGO MONEY...  
HMM... AND HIS  
PLACE IS  
CALLED...





BUT GEORGE'S SHREWD WORDS...



...AND SO ANGELA RETURNED TO ALBANY HOME, MUCH TO THE DELIGHT OF THE APPREHENSIVE AIR BRAKES...



ANGELA WAS QUICKLY UNSHACKLED AND RUSHED INTO GEORGE'S STUDY... THESE BREWED A SICKNESS DESPITE ALL HOPE IN HIS VOICE...

I URGED TO WEAR A MASK, BUT IT'S MUCH BETTER FOR PEOPLE TO GET OVER THE SHOCK AT THE BREAKDOWN...



NEXT MORNING, ANGELA FOUND HER NEW EMPLOYMENT IN THE CLOTHING...



AT DAWN-TO-DUSK, PARASITIC RUMORS, ANGELA RETURNED TO TROYVILLE, FEELING A SICKNESS MATURED OF PARANOIA AND FEAR...



ALL THIS COULD MAY NOT GET SOMEONE TO CLEAN UP THIS PLACE?"



AREN'T YOU EVER LONESOME?



...AND HE LOOKED AT HER WITH A DISPREZIEFUL AND APPEAL IN HIS EYES...

LITTLE CHICK...  
IT... POSSIBLY  
THE WHOLE  
THE HELL...

THE NOT  
THAT I AM  
AFRAID  
OF HIM.  
HE JUST...

AT LEAST GIVE  
SOMETHING -- SO  
I CAN FEEL I AM NOT  
ON EARTH HERE  
GONE. GIVE IT  
VALUABLE.

BUT AS TIME PASSES  
ME... REBOLTS  
ME IN A WAY AND  
YET... I JUST DON'T  
KNOW...

BUT THE NEXT DAY BROUGHT ANOTHER SURPRISE

YOU SHOULD  
ALWAYS BE  
CHARACTERIZED  
BY KNOWLEDGE.

THE--THE CHICK  
THEY WILL BE WANT  
AS THESE  
BREAKFAST

AH--YES.  
I WANTED TO SELECT  
ANY OTHER COOKING  
-- YOU HAVE NO IDEA  
WHAT HEAVEN YOU  
HAVE MEANT TO  
ME...

BUT THIS IS NOT HOW I DREW IT  
IN THE STYLING OF ALL THESE HOUSES. BUT ALSO  
AN ENEMY...



AS THIS CAT DOWNSTAIRS, RUMBLE  
FELT HIMSELF LOSING CONTROL.  
A RAGEFUL RUMBLE LIFTED UP HIS  
HANDS AS HE HELD THE LIFELESS  
CREATURE.

HIS... IN PLEASURE  
AND PUCKERED UP INTO A SMALL  
CIRCLE.



THE DEATH-LIKE SILENCE OF ALBERIC HOUSE WAS  
BROKEN ONLY BY THE SOFT TAPPING OF TYPE -  
WETTED PAPER UNTIL A SUDDEN HIGH-PITCHED, BUR-  
SHATTERED SOUND ECHOED AROUND THE HOUSE...



THE BLOOD IN ANGELA'S VENUS ALMOST FROZE  
WHEN SHE DROD INTO THE HALL AND SAW BEAVER...



INCHINGING WHAT HAD  
SHOCKED BEAVER SO,  
ANGELA RAN INTO  
THE GARDEN, WHERE  
SHE FOUND...



DESPITE HER TERROR, ANGELA  
DID NOT RETURN EMPTY-HANDED  
THAT NIGHT...

THE SHORT ORGASM WILL BE  
INVISIBLE TO FENCE, IT'S  
TOO SPECIALIZED AND NEEDS  
MUCH TIME ON IT FOR THE  
MELTDOWN VALVE TO BE  
WEAKENED.



ANGELA BREATHED HEAVILY  
KNOWING IT WAS SO FAR AWAY.

THE FOLLOWING EVENING  
ANGELA CLEARED  
IMMEDIATELY AND  
STAYED TO RESEARCH  
ALBERIC HOUSE.  
BUT ANGELA CLEPT  
IMMEDIATELY INTO  
THE HALL...



TURNING THE LIGHTS ON  
AT THE GARDEN SCREAM  
BAYER RUSHED OVER TO  
ANGELA...

I THOUGHT  
YOU ALREADY  
KNEW HOW...

HE NEVER HAD  
YOU, I'VE MADE  
ALL MY RELATIVES  
REJOICE THAT THEY  
NEVER HAD  
YOU...

HE'S VERY  
NICE SOLELLY  
— DO YOU  
WANT TO  
MEET HIM?

BUT DON'T WORRY,  
THAT'S ONLY MY GROSS  
UNCLE ULRICH. I'M AFRAID  
HE DOES LOOK A LITTLE  
STRANGE... TO AN  
OUTSIDER.

SO, TERRIFIED BY THE STRANGENESS OF THE  
HIDEOUS FACE, ANGELA COULD EASILY  
SHAKE HER HEAD, DESPAIRINGLY TRYING  
TO REJECT HIS HORRIFIC GREETING.

AGAIN BAYER'S FACE  
MANAGED A SICKENING  
GRINS WHILE HE  
CONTINUED...

THE OTHER DAY  
IN THE GARDEN  
I LOST CONTROL  
OF MYSELF. IT  
WAS HORRIBLE.  
I KNEW IT IS MY  
CONSCIENCE FEELS  
THAT...

BUT NO,  
I'M ALL RIGHT  
NOW, SISTER.  
YOU HAVE  
COMPLETED  
THE CURE.

—  
NOT BAD  
GIRL...

SEEING WHAT NEW TROUBLE  
WOULD PHARAOH ANGELA  
RETURNED TO HER WORK THE  
FOLLOWING DAY, ONLY TO BE  
GREETED WITH

THIS DAY  
ONCE AGAIN  
TO FIND HER XENIA  
WHO WAS SAID TO BE  
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL  
OF HER DAY... MADE  
THAN THOUSAND  
YEARS AGO...

SHE MUST HAVE  
HAD VIOLET COLOURING  
IT MATCHES YOUR  
EYES AND SKIN  
PERFECTLY...

SUDDENLY, BAYER  
WALKED OVER TO HER  
WITH SATISFACTION AND  
CONTINUED THE SAME  
TONE AS HE HAD BEEN WILL  
SAFETY...

BEATING PAGE SUDDENLY  
CHANGED AT ONCE. IT  
FILLED WITH HOPE, YET  
DRASTIC, WITH ANTICIPATION,  
YET DREAD...

YOU SHOULD  
KEEP ALL THOSE  
THINGS IN  
THE GARDEN.

I REPROVED HER  
FOR PREGNANCY,  
BUT SHE COULD  
NOT LOVE ME...

DON'T LIKE  
BAYER. YOU HAVE  
TO SEE... PEOPLE  
MY THINGS ARE  
MUCH BETTER  
HERE... WITH ME

Angela  
will you  
marry me?

FOR HOURS AFTER, ANGELA KEPT HEADING  
BENNETT'S PROPOSAL IN HER MIND AND THAT  
NIGHT...

DON'T WORRY. JUST  
PLAY ALONG WITH  
HIM. TAKE THE RING  
AS AN ENGAGEMENT  
PRESENT AND BE  
MEMBER THE  
COMMUNION WHEN  
HE OPENS THE GATE.  
THE BIG ONE!  
WE'LL BE BACK!

IT'S NO  
UNCOMMON  
I JUST  
DO IT  
TO HIM.

THE NEXT DAY BENNETT WAS  
FATIGUED HAPPY TO NOTICE  
ANGELA'S PEACE AND TENSION  
WINDING DOWN.

YOU'RE ALIVE AND YOU AREN'T  
LONESOME / AND I DON'T  
SEEING YOU SHOULD HAVE  
THE RING. THAT IT SHOULD  
ADORN SUCH A BEAUTIFUL  
HAND AFTER ALL THESE  
CENTURIES.

AND AS BENNETT'S FINGERS  
TOUCHED OVER THE RINGS  
CONVERSATION, ANGELA  
WATCHED HIM IN SILENT NAIVITY.

ANGELA WAS DELIRIOUS TO  
DEVINE CONVERSATION AND  
THE CONCENTRATION ON  
THE NUMBER...

I HAVE BEEN TRYING  
OF A CONFIDENCE TO  
MAKES ME A BENEFICIO  
BUT I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU  
KNOW WHAT THAT IS  
WELL, I MADE A  
WHISTLE...

BUT NO— I  
MUST NOT  
WHISTLE... EVER...

NO MATTER  
WHAT HAPPENS!

YOU MUST MEET SOME OF MY  
RELATIVES. THEY CAN EXPLAIN  
THE SITUATION TO YOU  
MUCH BETTER THAN I  
COULD.

YES—YES  
I'D  
BEGLUED  
LICK  
THAT...

WE'LL HAVE AN  
ENGAGEMENT  
PETY! AND IT  
CAN BE IN  
FANCY DRESS!  
EVERYONE CAN  
WEAR MASKS,  
AND GIVE YOU  
THE CHANCE  
TO GET TO  
KNOW MY  
FAMILY IN  
CONFIDENCE.

AND SO CAME THE  
NIGHT OF THE MASKED  
POETY.

COME, MY  
DEAR. IT IS A  
SHAME TO HIDE  
SUCH BEAUTY.  
BUT HERE WE  
MUST ALL BE  
MASKED.



FINALLY, SHE WAS ABLE TO  
SLIP AWAY FROM THE CROWD  
INTO THE STUDIO...

OPEN, OPEN  
... PLEASE, PLEASE  
OPEN!

ANGELA FELT OBLIGED TO  
DANCE WITH MANY OF  
DEVINE'S RELATIVES. BUT  
EVEN THOUGH THEY TRIED  
TO FLIRT WITH HER, SHE HADN'T  
SEEN UNCLE URGAN...  
WHAT COULD THESE OTHER  
DANCING PARTYPOLIS REALLY  
LOOK LIKE?

...BUT SOMEONE ELSE  
HAD SLIPPED AWAY  
TOO...



AND AT THE SAME FINALLY  
OPENED, REVEALING ITS  
TREASURES. ANGELA SCOPPED  
UP ALL SHE COULD CARRY, BUT  
WHEN SHE TURNED TO LEAVE . . .

TAKE THEM! THE MONEY  
AND OTHER THINGS DO  
NOT MATTER TO ME . . .  
GIVE THEM TO WHOEVER  
YOU PLEASE! BUT YOU  
COULD STILL . . . LOVE  
ME . . .

NO . . . YOU'RE HIDEOUS . . .  
DEMONISH! THE MOMENT THE  
JEWELS! THAT'S ALL I EVER  
WANTED FROM YOU!

AND ONCE  
MORE ANGELA  
LIES DOWN  
TO TRAVEL AND  
FORCES A TIGHT  
LITTLE CIRCLE,  
AS HE HAWKS  
DEEPLY.

TWO SHOUTS MADE  
THE SILENT TUNNEL  
SUDDEDLY TURNED  
THE STUDY A FIRE-  
PLACE, SWINGING  
HEAVILY, LOUDER  
THAN ANYTHING  
THAT SHE HAD EVER  
HEARD.

AND A BALLOON  
CHURNED INCESTUM  
OF DISGUST!

LATER, THAT SAME NIGHT . . .

WHERE  
BORN YESTERDAY  
DID YOU GET IT?

I COULD NEVER  
LOVE YOU . . . YOU  
MANUFACTURED THING  
TO MAKE SURE IF YOU  
EVER TOUCHED ME  
YOU'D PREDUCE

BUT ANGELA IS  
ONLY DEEPLY VIB-



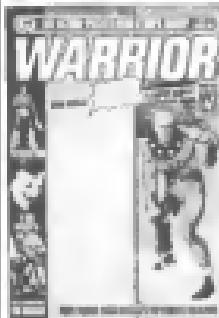
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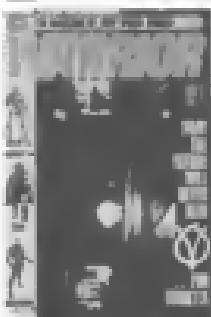


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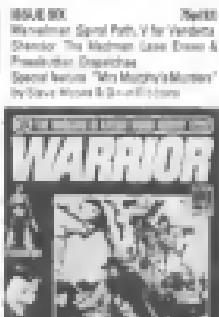
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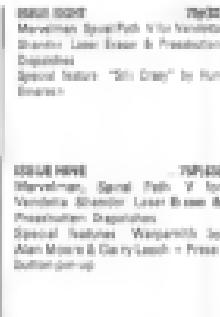
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# A TASTE OF PARANOIA

A Look at  
Hammer's  
Psychological  
Drama Films  
1961-72

by  
Keith Dudley  
and  
Glen Davies

It could be said that Hammer made its name by 'killing it', on whatever was most popular during a certain time. Between 1961 and 1965 50% of their production output was based on the more popular radio plays and serials of the day, from the *Club Barten* films beginning in 1961, up to 1965 with the comedy production *The Spyce Is Fast*.

From then on the company turned to television for their ideas and produced *The Gasterman's Apartment*. In 1965 *Experiment* was a surprise success and Hammer found that they could left themselves out of the TV picture and concentrate on top class productions with world wide distribution. But even so, after the next five years of producing classic fantasy films, the team, which included Michael Canevas, director Terence Fisher and screenwriter Jimmy Sangster, once again found themselves in the inevitable oil. Michael Canevas left Hammer to form his own production company, Capricorn Film and Sangster stayed with the company but decided against writing any more 'fantasy horror' scripts. He found himself 'typecast'. In the publicity ads for Berman and Baker's 1967 production he had even been billed as 'Jimmy "Paranoid" Sangster'.

It was time to try something different and in 1968 after the enormous success of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, Sangster approached Hammer with the idea of producing a series of psychological thrillers or, as Sangster called them, 'Inanity murder thrillers', thus creating within the Hammer banner format a new genre. On repeated viewings the Hammer suspense films look very little like the Hitchcock film that critics compared them with. Indeed, if it was not for *Mistletoe and Peppermint*, Sangster's movies could be termed as pure Hammer. Although these type of films have been around since *The Spiral Staircase* only Hammer has styled them into a profitable series, and some fine offerings were produced like Denis Niall's superb *Taste of Fear*, *The Henry and Silvia Hazzard's Paranoia*.

The first film in the series to go into production (and scripted by Sangster) was Denis Niall's *Taste of Fear* (US *Senses of Fear*) in 1961. The film is rarely seen these days but is easily the best in the series of James Canevas' 'Mist-Highway Brothers'. The film tells the story of Penny Appleby, a wheelchair cripple, who goes to visit her father in the South of France only to be told by Jane, her stepmother, that her father is away on business. Making herself at home Penny's visit soon turns into a nightmare when she discovers the body of her father in the summerhouse and is told by her stepmother that she is seeing things. When they return to the summerhouse the body has disappeared. The following day she sees the body again and Dr Garsel, who is a guest at the house,

believes that the car accident which left Penny a paraplegic has also effected her mind. But Penny has other ideas and after discovering the body again, this time floating in the swimming pool she decides to contact the police, but is prevented by the startling developments in Sangster's script.

*Taste of Fear* is a highly entertaining film, with Holt giving a tour de force performance from start to finish as the unwitting victim of her stepmother. Jane, played by Ann Todd, was Bob the stepmother's lover, played by the less Ronald Lewis. Denis Niall, as Holt, is superb because of his training as a boxer, keeps the film going at a fast pace, aided by Douglas Slocombe's grainy monochrome photography which results in giving the film more suspense and tension than perhaps it would normally have had. For once even the critics were happy. "More than a little, a tremendous, all out shocker" said *The Daily Express*, "If what you are after is a touch of horror in the dark then *Taste of Fear* is for you". It's a clever film with a good twist ending, stylishly directed by a master. Sadly Denis Niall never repeated the success he had with *Taste of Fear*, he returned to Hammer to direct *The Henry* in 1966 and again in 1971 to film *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb* and it was during production of the *Mummy* film that Niall suffered a massive heart attack and died, his legacy being taken by Michael Canevas.

1968 saw the second film in the series, *Mistletoe*, again scripted by Jimmy Sangster (who also produced) and directed by Michael Canevas. Dick Clement in his Little Shoppe of Horrors issue #1 summed up the film nicely by saying "A boring thriller based on a Jimmy Sangster script. Don't watch this at night because you'll never be able to stay awake." As in the earlier *Taste of Fear* the story takes place in France. Georges (played by Donald Houston) escaped from a lonely asylum with the intention of murdering his wife's lover (Kathleen Meehan). Georges, it seems, has a fetish for any asphyxiation tactics and puts them to good use during the film's 80 minute running time. Although the film has quite a few surprises and plot twists it never gives the viewer the feeling of menace that the first film managed. The British Film Institute's *Monthly Film Bulletin* said at the time "Masterfully and decisively triumphed into an mediocrity by the direction of Michael Canevas, with its marked absence of film sense." That sentence just about said it all for what must be the worst film in the psychological series.

A man returns home after many years of being thought dead, which causes considerable upheaval in the Ashby household, not least to Simon Ashby, who was previously murdered the brother whom the stranger now claims to be. This is the basic plot of the *Held Paranoik*, filmed at Bray Studios and

Keith Dudley and Glen Davies are members of Hammer's staff and studio. When not writing for the Hammer International Journal (or the IJ Society), and research for a projected book on Hammer's unproduced projects.

directed by award-winning lighting cameraman Freddie Francis. *Parenoids* is the only film in the series that can really be said to be Psycho-inspired. Hammer's study of an organ-playing lunatic who keeps the resurrected corpse of his murdered younger brother's body hidden in an outhouse was long thought to be based on an original screenplay by Jimmy Sangster but in fact Sangster's name appears on the credits as sole scripter. It has since been revealed that the original idea for *Parenoids* was not the product of Mr Sangster's imagination, but was based on a 1948 novel *Bent House*, written by Josephine Tey.

Bret Ferrer was considered to have enough thrills and suspense to be optioned for filming in 1958 by Hammer, a script was completed and advertisements appeared in the trade journals proclaiming the forthcoming film to be "as startling as it is ingenious", but by 1960 Bret Ferrer had still not been filmed and it appeared that the project had been abandoned. In fact the project was still very much alive, which is more than can be said for Simon Ashby's brother. Indeed under Freddie Francis' direction the viewer is left unsure of the supposed brother as the gentleman he claims to be until late in the film - whereas the novel leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that Ferrer is Tony as he is called in the film, as an inspector from the start. Who wrote the original screenplay remains a mystery but it is thought that the screen was taken off the shelf sometime after 1960 and revised as a successor to *Taste of Fear*. The screenplay was then handed over to Sangster and sometime later *Parenoids* was born. Oliver Reed's ballyhooing, pub-brawling manner and the fiery climax are all a product of the Hammer style but the basic narrative remains faithful to Josephine Tey's original conception.

*Parenoids* was released in 1963 to only moderate success at the box-office. It remains a formidable film notable only for a fine performance by Oliver Reed in an otherwise poor cast that included Janette Scott and American Actor Alexander D'Ascanio. It is interesting to note here that for all the films in the main series, Hammer returned to the early 1950s practice of using American name actors, probably to ensure a release in the States.

Sangster now seemed to be running short of ideas and his script for *Nightmare* again produced in 1963, returned to the basic "now you see the body, now you don't" type film, although *Nightmare* was well directed by Freddie Francis & just didn't have enough suspense to hold the audience in the way that the earlier *Taste of Fear* did. The very thin plot has the eponymous and guardian stepmother trying to drive a young girl insane in order to collect her share of an inheritance, but the story was so shallow



that the audience knew exactly how the film would end five minutes after the start.

1968 saw a completely different psychological drama from Hammer, different because it was the first in the series to be filmed in full colour and it didn't have a noted by Jimmy Sangster. Hammer employed American writer Richard Matheson to adapt Anne Rice's road nightmare into a workable screenplay, the result was *Fearless* (*USA Girl, Die My Darling*). A young girl visits the mother of her dead father only to discover that mother is a religious psychotic who wants the girl to go through a mock wedding ceremony and join her son in paradise, but the young lady doesn't want to know, much to the disgust of the old lady. Veteran American actress Takella Benfield hampered her way through the film as Mrs Traylor (the lunatic mother) but sadly Stephanie Powers was thoroughly miscast as the bride-to-be, and couldn't match up to Miss Benfield's performance.

There were some nice supporting performances, notably from a very young Donald Sutherland as a lunatic odd-job man (in fact most of the staff employed at the house were mentally damaged in one way or another!). What made *Fearless* different from its predecessors was the fact that there were no plot twists, no actual suspense and no real climax. It was a straight forward modern day adaptation of a gothic mystery story competently directed by Salvo Randone.

Freddie Francis returned to the company in 1969 to direct what was to be the last of the trilogy of psychological thrillers, *Hysteria*. Again scripted by Jimmy Sangster, hampered not through lack of imagination (as in *Nightmare* or *Malediction*) but because of too much. The plot was so intricate and complicated that it left the viewer nonplussed, with so many loose ends left hanging no one quite knew what had happened.

Released in England in June 1969, *Hysteria* attempted to tell the story of Christopher Smith, an American, who is suffering from amnesia after being involved in a road accident. Smith is discharged from hospital by his psychiatrist, Dr Keller, and sets up house in a luxurious London flat that has been paid for by an anonymous benefactor. In reality, this is Dr Keller who, through the intricacies of the script, has murdered his wife so that he can marry his mistress Denise. The body of Keller's wife is left in the flat's bathroom so that the murder can be pinned onto Smith who, unknown to Keller, has now regained his memory... Confused? You will be.

The opening scenes of *Hysteria* seem quite promising, with director Freddie Francis using his camera techniques to good advantage and creating an atmosphere of sheer terror as Smith struggles to remember his past life, but,



Facing page: *Psycho*. Oliver Reed photo  
bottom left: *The Night*  
in Pictures:  
Anjelica and  
William Donald  
Bachelder and  
Telly Savalas.

Banquo  
comes across  
of Blacula. Right:  
Joey Sturgess and  
Powers' *Psycho*  
and *Requiem*.  
*Requiem*  
comes safely in  
Powers. Bottom:  
Ralph Bates, Ann  
Garrison and John  
Carradine in a quiet  
moment from  
*Pearl in the Night*.

because the plot is so involved, the atmosphere is completely lost. A shame, because this could have been a very good film. A good cast struggled to make something of it but it was a hopeless task, with Maurie Garber as Hammarskjöld, down at heel, ready private detective closing the film from everybody.

1963 will probably go down in Hammer's history as the year they produced one of Hollywood's biggest stars to appear in one of their films. Miss Davis accepted the lead role in Jeremy Sanderson's adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's *The Honey*, but only on condition that it would be directed by Seth Holt. The *Honey* turned out to be a minor classic because of Miss Davis' acting ability and Holt's masterful direction, and with a very strong supporting cast. The production part however failed, and indeed the critics raved over the film when it was released in October of 1968. Miss Davis played the part of a children's nanny who isn't quite right in the head and who has a peculiar habit of inducing people to commit suicide or to bring about heart attacks, as in the case of Jill Bennett. William Dix played Joey, the little boy who Henry takes after, and was superb in his debut acting role. He is the only one who realises that Henry isn't the steel baby-mill.

Seth Holt was again acclaimed for his work on *The Nanny*, and it was his direction rather than Sanderson's script that made it into the minor classic it is regarded as today.

*The Nanny* saw the end of the first cycle of Psycho-inspired productions and it wasn't until 1973 that another film revisited Alan J. Pakula's *Requiem*. As in earlier productions of this type, Jeremy Sanderson supplied the script, which appeared to lift over from the 1960s. With the relaxation of censorship in the 70s, the film seemed to be an appropriate vehicle for nudity and drug abuse, but in fact the only notable thing is about the film is Stephen Powers showing a hell of a lot more than she ever did in the abysmal TV show *Nam* to Hart, and I'm not talking about acting ability. A total waste of time, money and acting ability.

Hammer's last two suspense films were made back-to-back at Elstree Studios in late 1972. It was the idea of Michael Caine to release both films, *Pearl in the Night* and *Sleight on till Morning*, in a double bill under the collective title of *Woman in Fear*. The double bill release was not a success, in fact neither film stood a chance at the box office as EMI, the distributor, withdrew them from release after only three weeks on the circuit.

*Sleight on till Morning* is a good example of a director (Peter Collinson) trying to make something out of a script which was probably not there, resulting in an utter failure of a workable idea which, in itself, shows a complete inability to





That Sweet Strawberry, just A Taste of You  
(bottom) Peter Vaughan advances  
maniacally, armed with knife and poison  
in *Pearls*.



understand what the game means. *Fear in the Night*, on the other hand, clearly shows that Gangster who wrote the script, directed and produced, is a master at creating suspense out of what is basically old hat.

#### **Straight as Till Morning and Pearls the Night**

"Both films study a woman in fear, a fear created when faced with the loneliness and eventual terror in the jungles that is life in the big city today."

Michael Canevas.

A good workable idea one would think, but Peter Collinson had different ideas and saw *Straight as Till Morning* as being full of pathos mixed with terror. More importantly he also saw the film as more than just a fear picture. "I hope to give it a documentary flavor by having the camera observe rather than me direct." This attempt at making the film more up market just fails, as the plot is too far removed from original life to film as a kitchen sink drama. Collinson has his cameras linger on the things we actually go to the cinema to get away from – the sleazy world of bed-sitters and Wimpy bars is hardly entertaining and, even on the lowest level, the film fails. As a case book study of loneliness the plot plods on, things happen to the leading character, Hormone, things but we just don't care. Brenda Thompson (Bita Tushingham) does not earn our sympathy, or even our concern, she is just not real enough for that. If there is anything valid in John Fasocia's song it is lost in Collinson's hands, for he indulges the length of many scenes, forcing any interest into the ground and making what seems to be a simple story (and a human interest story at that) into a seemingly endless stream of camera images held together by the barest of plots. Aside from Collinson's documentary approach, the film also suffers from being based on a stage play (most scenes are shot on three or four sets whilst the location shots are all of no real use other than showing us that this is happening today). What we therefore see has an indifferent story, badly filmed by a director whose talents and judgement are in question. The one good thing, and perhaps in a small way a saving grace for the film, is the performance from Shani Bryant as Peter, who injects more sympathy than Ray Tushingham's merely played Hormone, who is after all the hormonal. Her role is, to be sure, an actor's role, requiring more style and ability than she can give. Little else can be said of this film, it does not thrill or entertain and in the main bores its viewers.

If *Straight as Till Morning* is a modern suspense film then one must only praise Jimmy Gangster for making *Fear in the Night*, a good old fashioned fear film. Gangster understands this genre, although he did make a mess of a few

films during the 60s, and knows not to mess around with such treacly ideas as documentary fantasy. Where Collinson goes for realism to the point of losing his audience, Gangster opt for atmosphere and stylized butts up theirs whilst still retaining the all-important factor of believability, and this is the main difference in their respective styles. Gangster's song is not aimed at realism but concerns itself with a suspenseful tale that gets you interested in something that is unlikely to every really happen but whilst you watch it on the screen is pretty darned believable.

*Fear in the Night* is of mostly red Peggy Heller who has recently recovered from a nervous breakdown. She is attacked in her room one night while waiting for her husband (Robert) to return home. He has been given a new job as headmaster headmaster in a boys' school in the country and it is here that Peggy will be going to live, but because of her recent illness, neither her husband nor her husband call the police after the attack because they believe the assailant with the artificial arm that she talks of must be in her mind.

Peggy and Robert drive out to the country school and are given a cottage to live in, and, though Peggy likes her new home, she remains uneasy, for everything is so clean and quiet that she finds it difficult to believe that any boys attend the school.

Whilst walking round the empty school she comes across the headmaster, who speaks free enough if a little odd and as Peggy leaves she fails to notice that the headmaster has an artificial arm. She returns back to the cottage thinking that Robert has returned from a trip to London, and she enters the house only to be attacked by the unknown man again. Later, when Robert hears of this he advises her once again not to call the police.

When walking in the woods the following day Peggy comes across a wild rabbit which is suddenly shot and killed only a few inches away from her. Molly Carmichael comes out of hiding and picks up the dead animal, they exchange a few words but Peggy takes an instant dislike to her and leaves, noticing a sculpture that she later uses. Peggy is now so nervous of being left alone that Robert has to leave her strength, soon after there is another attack, but this time Peggy manages to shoot the man before running into the school. On opening the door however she finds nothing but a tape recorder. The headmaster returns, enters the room and she sees his fake arm – at once she shoots him.

On Robert's return he is unable to get Peggy to speak, so goes to see Molly (we learn they are lovers, who plan to have Peggy removed from the school) and he reveals that he is a broken-faced teacher but mental nurse to the headmaster. He explains that the school has had no pupils

For the last five years since a fire destroyed Michael Carrick's sanity and his wife Helen Roberta and Molly needed to know where the headmaster is and, after attempting to break her silence with threats, they decide to kill Peggy and leave a suicide note which will admit her guilt of killing the head. They are interrupted by the ringing of the school bell and realize that Michael must still be alive. In the chaos that follows Roberta mistakenly kills Molly and Peggy ends up trapped in the gym by her husband, who is about to kill her when he is attacked and killed by Michael. The headmaster had known of the plan all along and had replaced the cartridges in Peggy's gun with blanks. Later Peggy is questioned by the police outside the school but is too shocked to say anything, from inside the school comes the sound of love singing.

As its worst *Pearl in the Night* is a chronicle of a rotten after, with the headmaster being nothing but a red herring. Roberta's opponents were away from the school away from the killer armed man strike does not keep us guessing for long, and one knows who the murderer is long before Bergman decides to show us. How many times have hammerings such as this been used on film? Both Holly's books of *Pearl* concerned itself with the same thing (people trying to drive other people internal but it does not matter if you do guess who the villain is since the film has much to offer, particularly in its performance of Judy Garland. Ralph Bates and the old master himself Peter Cushing are excellent although Joan Collins leaves a lot to be desired. Arthur Cright's camera wanders smoothly through Don Perton's wonderfully lit sets creating added tension to the narrative and Bergman handles his team with care and style, making a cloak-and-dagger story into a highly successful blend of mounting fear and well written characters.

*(H) Pearl in the Night* was based on a script that Bergman had written for Hammer in the mid sixties. *The Glass* which was basically the same story but took place on a river boat inspired in the Thirties.

So there you have it, ten films based on the same theme... insanity and murder. Although many other production companies produced films of the same type during the same period (including American and William Castle only Hammer managed to make them into a workable series, even if the majority of them were bad).

Alfred Hitchcock and Psycho had a lot to answer for and it will be interesting to see if Psycho II has the same effect again on the film industry.

Hammer fans can look forward to the continuation of *The Mystery of* *Heerman* - 1968 to 1969 with *Brenna, Prince of Darkness* and *One Million Years BC* in issue 27.

# HAMMER'S PSYCHO MOVIES

## checklist

**1961** *Jewess/Baptist* Pro. Hammerstein/Michael Llewellyn-Davies Ed. James Woods. A Universal release. 90 mins.

### Nightmare (1962)

Robert Knight Dir. Henry Robert Moore Produced by Oliver Maxfield. James Leslie (as John). Brenda Marshall (as Mary) (as Janet). George A. Cooper (as John with three techniques). John Mills and Timothy Berrington. Pro. Freddie Francis. Prod/Writ. Jimmy Sangster. Pts. John Mills, Max Beebe Books. Ed. James Woods.

A Universal release in Hammermania. 82 mins.

### Horror (1964) *Blame It, My Darling* (1965)

Terence Fisher Dir. Michael Haneke. Hammer Pro. Hammer. Peter Vaughan as Edward (as Edward). Gordon Jackson (as Edward). Donald Sinden and Brian Oliver White. Dr. Oliver Neumann. Pro. Anthony Hinde. Ed. from the novel *Nightmare* by Anna Maxwell. By Richard Matheson. Writ. Arthur Robison. Dir. William Joseph. Ed. James Woods and John Daniell. Music by Ray Arden and Michael Mills. Exec Prod. Michael Hinde. A Columbia release. 90 mins. long. 100 mins. 8 mins. cut by BBC.

### Horror (1965)

Robert Webber (as Smith). Leslie Gordon (as Dennis). Anthony Newley (as Ed). Jennifer Jayne (as Greta). Maurice Denham (as Edward). Pro. Freddie Francis. Prod/Writ. Jimmy Sangster. Pts. John Mills. Ed. Don Barker. Ed. James Woods. Ed. M. O. M. Hinde. 81 mins.

### Dark Money (1966)

Beth Chatto (as Almond). Wendy Craig (as Margot). Jim Haynes (as President James Wilson). Ian McEwan. Maurice Denham (as Dr. Beaumont). William Dan (as Jerry). Pamela Franklin (as Abby) with Jack Westley and Alfred Burke. Dr. Ruth Hart. Prog/Hist. Jimmy Sangster. Writ. Harry Newman. Mus. Michael Bailey Bennett. Ed. James Woods and Tom Sangster. Exec Prod. Anthony Hinde. A Warner Bros release. 93 mins.

### Darkness (1967)

Sophia Loren, Profer (as Susan Roman). James Cagney (as George Johnson). Pro. Gerald Ford (as Donald Rydell). John Huston (as Lillian). John Astin (as Carter). Kristen Byrne (as Carolyn). Ed. Alan Gilman. Pro. Michael Cimino. Ed. Jimmy Sangster with David Knopfler. Pro. Paul Baxley. Mus. Michael Williams. Ed. Greg Morris. A Warner Bros release. 88 mins.

### Straight On 'Til Morning (1970)

Rita Tushingham (as Dorothy). Shani Waller (as Anna). Tom Bell (as Jimmy). United Artists. 89 mins. (as 101). Kylie Minx (as Carolyn). James Bond (as Abert with Cleo Kelly and Ronald Bremner).

Dir. Peter Collinge. Pro. Roy Slaggs. Writ. Michael Pennington. Ed. Brian Pendleton. Mus. National Shrine Ed. Alan Pendleton. Exec Prod. Michael Cimino. Art. M. G. M. Hinde. 81 mins.

### Pearl in The Night (1973)

Judy Garland (as Peggy). Robert Helpmann (as Robert). Ralph Bates (as Michael Cromwell). James Cagney (as Melly Cromwell with Odilia). Lind and Jeffres Evans. Pro. Hammer. Jimmy Sangster. Writ. Arthur Woods. Mus. John McCabe. Ed. Peter Wren. Exec Prod. Michael Cimino. Art. M. G. M. Hinde. 81 mins.

# CLASSIC GORE

Review by John Fleming

The British film critics call it "an exploitation film which is about terror."

The Frost/Chase Saw Massacre has been banned in the country. But it has been drawing the crowds in the US with a poster that says AMERICA'S MOST BLOODY AND BRUTAL CRIMES - WHAT HAPPENED IS TRUE. NOW THE MOTION PICTURE THAT'S JUST AS REAL - WHO WILL SURVIVE AND WHAT WILL BE LEFT OF THEM?

In the British screening will be a British Film Institute members-only show during next year's London Film Festival. Ken Winton, festival director, had doubts about screening it. "For sheer horror and fright, the film makes Psycho look tame."

The movie opens with a black screen. On the soundtrack there are crunching, bone-crushing sounds, a dash of a skeleton on the screen. Then back to black. A dash of pulped flesh. Black. A crunching hand. Black. A mangled corpse. Black. Black and quick crimson flashes of decomposing bodies.

Then a beautiful summer day. Bright, clear, clean photography. With a voice on the radio talking about greenhouse-growth. There are corpses rising. And then we see two sweaty decomposing bodies apparently tangled on a pointed graveyard stake.

Then the credits.

The sun of the sun sets through a red filter. Sanguine flames, lapping up off the surface of the sun. With the credits pressed nearly over them.

Then rise to the full yellow orb of the sun.

And a dried armilla.

And there are three live crawling young people. Two all-American boys. Two all-American girls. And Franklin, a big fat sloth in a wheelchair who is in the film to be laughed at!

At this point in a horror film, you'd expect someone to say, "Hey, Harry, there's something wrong with the radio." Instead, one of the girls sets up the traditional sense of unease by talking about the maladjusted formation of the planet. Saturn is in a bad position, man. It's going to be a rotten day.

And then robbery day starts when they pick up an evil-looking, mentally retarded hunch-back who starts talking about straightforward: "My family's always been in hell," he says.

He develops a hankering for Franklin's knife. He takes it and cuts open his own. Then he takes out a cursor and shoves Franklin's forearm. The horrified all-American girls throw out their hunch-back. He dares his blood on the side of their van. Shades of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Looking in an astrology magazine, the youngster discover that—ya-ya—it's going to be an unpredictable day.

Franklin's arm is bandaged.

The youngsters stop at a gas station and ask directions to "The Old Franklin Plaza." The gas station owner's eyes widen as if they'd asked for Beulah's Captain "The Old Franklin Plaza" in page.

But they do find it. And two of the

youngsters, Kirk and Pam, waddle over to a neighbouring farm through a field of sunflowers. "Archie, look!" At the barn, they find two Vets, an American Indian and a much hidden underdresser. (Remember the boy/girl cat pool in Psycho?) Oh, they also find a human sacch on the porch.

Kirk, who obviously hasn't seen Psycho, goes into the house. There's no sniffling, squirming, odd sound of a pig. And on the wall are ten *Pigalle*-stuffed heads with mounted animal heads. And then a human writhes through Kirk's skull and he shudders and shakin' dying on the floor as the killer drags him off.

Pam, obviously more too intelligent, approaches the house. And goes inside. She trips up and falls into a room.

The room is covered with thousands of feathers. Human bones. Stuffed. Bloody. Arnie. Dangling around the room. And a bear in a butcher's cage. She's in the murderer's workshop. She turns, clutching Star's grabbed by a man. He lifts her and takes her to a large, gleaming, decapitated butcher's block. He hangs her up absurdly, the hook going in her back and up inside her body. As she hangs there screaming, he picks up a power saw and tears off Kirk's dead body. He starts to sever the limbs.

Meanwhile, back at The Old Franklin Plaza, Sally and Jerry and Franklin offer a bit of light relief. Then Jerry, who has obviously read the script thoroughly, wanders off across the fields towards a very large sun, low in the sky. Remember the plateau? Sally and Franklin are left talking about the malvolence of Saturn and, well, all the planets. It's a pretty unpredictable day so far, but.

Anyway, Jerry eventually returns to the same farm that Kirk and Pam found. He knows they've been there because of a coast job on the porch. And he hears strange gurgling-laughing sounds coming from inside the house. A sound that's a cross between a whale and a croc.

The road is pretty dumb. He goes into the house. "Would you go in?"

There's the familiar sound coming from the house. Jerry opens the lid. Paul, rechristened death, springs up out of the furnace.

Jerry turns to run away and our friendly manager puts a hammer into his stool.

Now comes, as you might have guessed, some interlude time.

We see the slant moon up in the black sky. This tells us it's night-time and reminds us about those malevolent heavenly bodies.

There's only Sally and Franklin left back at the old place now. And they're beginning to wonder where their friends have got to. Especially since their friends have the option day for the sun.

So off Sally and Franklin go through the underground looking for the others. Sally walking Franklin in his wheelchair. The treacherous Franklin thinks there's someone watching them, someone near than Franklin turns round and the ground plunges a chain-saw into his chest. Plunges it again. And again. And again. And again. The saw vibrating from side to side.

Sally runs off, screaming. The maniac chases her, going his way through the underground. When he can't kick off human limbs, he obviously makes do with

## Reviews:

### THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

### DEATH TRAP HALLOWEEN DERANGED

FRIDAY THE 13<sup>th</sup>

ting licks and snarls.

The chase is on and it ends up at the maniac's whale house (nearly not politics again?). Sally rushes inside and leaves the cover behind her. The maniac goes through it.

Sally rushes upstairs and finds an old couple in rocking chairs. But they're both decomposing. And their pet dog is just a skeleton with an animal hide thrown over it. The maniac is gaining on her.

She jumps through the first floor window. The maniac rushes downstairs. And the chase is on again. Through the underground. Sally screaming. The chase following with her barking chain-saw.

Sally runs past the gas station. (Remember the gas station?) The owner is dead. She screams incoherently at him. He looks outside and says there's no-one there. He goes off to get a truck to take her to town. But he leaves the door open and Sally is alone. She looks at the open door and

nothing happens.

Until the gunman comes back with his truck.

Fix a sack and a rope. He walks towards her.

Sally screams and puts up a tooth.

He knows it from her hand, then starts hitting and beating her up with a bottle. He binds and gaggs her and puts the sack over her head. He bundles her into the truck's cab and then

he remembers the light's still on in the gas station. So back he goes to switch it off. He returns to the truck's cab saying to the semi-conscious, hysterically whining Sally, "The cost of electricity's enough to drive a man out of business."

He drives off, occasionally prodding Sally with a sack and hitting her with a log.

As he approaches the maniac's house he sees a figure on the road. Gaura who? It's... the half-baked again. Good old Hatch. The gunman gets out of the truck and starts beating up Hatch. "I told you to stay away from that graveyard!" he shouts, so he begins to scream.

It turns out that the gunman and Hatch and the character maniac are all one big happy family. But a family of savages, because the character maniac had married up the front door trying to get at Sally.

Hatch ties Sally to a chair. Then Hatch and Chameauva go upstairs to collect one of the decomposing bodies in the rocking chair. It's grandpa. The family that stays together stays together.

They bring him down to meet Sally.

Chameauva puts up a battle and causes her finger. Gaura runs out to be alone after a tantrum. And a very old fashion it is. He starts sucking her blood. Sally frenzies.

At this point, re-cover the moon with another pass to show the passage of time. And round us of those nasty plants.

When Sally regains consciousness, she sees a dead armadillo, a human skull, three screaming marmosets and gnarles. The scene is topped off by a dangling lightbulb inside a decomposing head.

Hatch starts cracking gunman by saying he's just the cook. Gaura replies philosophically, "There are seven things you gotta do. Don't mean you gotta live it." A variation on "A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do".

The family decide to give Sally to

grandpa. "He's the best killer this town has. Gaua tell it in 3 minutes over."

They put a bullet in his head and drag Sally over. But—butterfingers—the keeps dragging the hammer. Although he does manage the occasional planching blow and can slice, bloody hell to the back of the skull.

But Sally gets free and jumps out the window, pursued by Hatch and Chameauva. Hatch walks happily behind her, slushing her in the back with his mace.

The film ends soon afterwards.

After the Texas Chain Saw Massacre screening, the Round Five audience said there were plans to form a roadside fight-the-death between a road and a shark. The road was already being built in the Pacific. The road has been promised \$1 million. If he loses, it goes to the road of life.

The Human Resources arranged spectacles of death too.

#### THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (1974)

Marilyn Burns (as Sally), Alan Alderson (as Jerry), Paul B. Partain (as Pigmalius), William Tex (as Bill), Tom McMillan (as Pent), Ethan Head (as The Pitch-fighter), Jim Sizemore (as The Old Man), Gouverneur Morris (as Carpenter), John Dugan (as Chameauva), Jerry Larentier (as The Town Doctor).

Stills: Tobe Hooper, Sir Rita Marley and Rita Marley, Phil Daniel, Paul Sally, Barbara and Larry Carroll, Mrs. Tobe Hooper and Wayne Bell.

£10.95 (Region 2 PAL) £14.95 (Region 1 NTSC)

## DEATH TRAP

Review by David Pirie

I am about everything surrounding The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, the debut movie of Tobe Hooper, but made some kind of history. Juicy anecdotes surround it like how the set was in vomit and blood; he was nearly sacked by the cast during shooting; all actors were referred to as work until she turned from actress to star. Even now at least one actor has sworn he will kill Hooper if he ever sees him again. The film itself became a legend, picked for the exclusive Oscar's Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival, it made a small fortune and attracted controversy wherever it was shown, including a knock-down drag-out preview debate at London's National Film Theatre from which few of the participants emerged with credit. But as a film, *The Texas* seemed to work in inverse proportion to the seriousness with which it was treated. Taken on its merit, except humour it doesn't add up to anything very much, but as a kind of warped-up horror comedy in which every character was more revolting than the next, including especially the victims, *Texas* was a novelty. It took the "gimmick, gimmick" theme about as far as it could go, and ended in decay with all the lurid enthusiasm and relish of an EC horror comic.

*Death Trap*, Tobe Hooper's new movie was unveiled at the Cannes Film Festival in 1976 and it seems to prove the point that Hooper is far closer to William M. Gaines



Performing 20 patrols John Dugan uses a crossbow over 100 paces to track over 200 working hours. Dugan's hair was whitewashed with paint then a salt cap applied. All the trees must have been painted major arteries. After months of hot seats were made to fit over his head he used fake gums. Finally make-up and hair effects were applied-on face, hands and neck.



than George Romero. In fact all the evidence suggests that *Death Trap* was partly inspired by an EC story, a Jack Davis swamp-horror opus in the January 'House of Fear' for 1954 called *Cemetery Chilling*. The setting and central character are identical and the film is very recognisably set in EC's decaying swamp-land, peopled with degenerate citizens, crushing broken-down shacks and hungry alligators.

The budget is obviously low but Hooper makes up for it by the same device he used in *They*—of transforming the entire action into one impossibly prolonged shock/horror classic.

Seven score colleagues of mine turned up for the last twenty minutes, and said they were glad to see the classic. I had difficulty in explaining to them that the entire film was exactly like that. It was *all* classic!

There is no real plot to speak of. A prostitute is thrown out of the local whorehouse for not behaving herself and finds herself in the heart of the swamp-land with nowhere to go for help except to a decaying shack which turns out, laughably, to be an insect resort. The set, specially built in Hollywood, looks spectacular if way, a dark hull of a building surrounded by blackened trees and knee-high mud. The hideously obese owner makes a pass at the girl and then wastes no time in making her the first of a long string of victims for which he offers anything to hand, especially his long scrotum and the friendly alligator under the porch. Gradually, for unexplained reasons, other women arrive at the resort including an ugly couple with a recalcitrant child in tow with Texas drawl of those people have any redeeming features, and the young husband in particular is a remorseless psychotic creep. All of them fall victim to their host who gobbles and moves his way through the mire, running up the radio in the hall to hide the screams and entering at a pried-open door, bashing the sharp and lethal doorknob. One woman is lured up the small stairs, others fall foul (no pun intended) of the scrotum or the alligator. Only the little girl manages to crawl underneath the floor where she remains, screaming her head off, as the alligator drags at her naked, writhing limbs.

Help is at hand in the unlikely form of Stuart Whitman, playing the local sheriff, but his intervention does not come till the last few minutes by which time few characters remain and the little girl is impaled on the top of a fence only inches away from the alligator's chomping jaws. Finally the old man becomes a victim of his pen and only has an oily limb break the surface of the water in a neat and explicit reference to the legend of Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*.

As the last touch suggests *Death Trap* is very much a kid's movie for adults (though it would be interesting to see what certificates it gets in the more lenient classes of America). Hooper quarreled violently with his producer and is reported to be



*Death Trap*: top, Victim Carolyn Jones; centre, Death Trapper Stuart Whitman; below, on recovering and of Stuart's psyche, writer Alan Parker



angry with the way the film was edited so probably won't help his career, but certainly deserves a showing.

#### **DEATH TRAP (1971)**

Stuart Whitman (as Sheriff), Stuart Whitman (as Sheriff), Carolyn Jones (Mrs. Hause), Melvyn Hayes (Hause), William Holden (Marty), with Crystal Bowersox, Roberta Collins, Robert Englund, James Lynn and Kyle Richards. Directed by Tobe Hooper. Produced by Maril Raskin. Co-produced by Al Feltz. Executive Producer Michaelson Raskin. No British Certificate

## **DERANGED**

Review by John Fleming

**T**he British Board of Film Censors didn't like it either.

Towards the end of *Deranged*, a naked girl is hung upside down. She is suspended from the neck of a bare tree by ropes tied around her ankles. The killer then inserts a bullet into her and, starting at the hip, cuts her open. The blood flows down over her breasts and the cancer's been stopped at last.

(Blood flowing on breasts is a 'trigger image' for rapists. The whole sequence has been cut out of the film.)

*Deranged* is a rather mundane tale considering it comes from the team that unleashed *Children Shouldn't Play With Dead Things*. Alan Ormsby, co-scripter, star and ghoul make-up expert on *Children*, scripted, produced and co-directed with Jeff Gillian *Deranged*.

Presumably Jeff Gillian is the Jeffrey Gillian who costarred in *Children*. Jack McGowan photographed both films.

And the fact that *Children*'s co-producer was Gary Godd, while *Deranged*'s associate director was Ken Godd and Martin Gillies makes it seem as if there's a ghoulish collection of friends somewhere in middle America.

The film is based on the same real-life incident that inspired *Psycho* and the banned Texas *Child-Sex Massacre*. Handymen Ed Galt was arrested in 1957 after molesting, murdering, maiming, raping and generally not being nice to local people.

*Deranged* is otherwise a decent little film, opens with an awful in-vision narrator who claims to be Tom Sims (the celeb) say he's Leslie (Gilligan), a newspaper columnist who covered the real events. This film isn't far the squeamish, as he says, "Nothing has been left to the imagination."

Simpleton Cobb (played by Roberta Blossenki) is a two-bit American fannie who looks like a cross between Dr. Bernard Miles and a Disney widow. His paralysed mother is dying. Women are vermin, she tells him. The wages of sin are a hairy sexual disease (Don't trust any woman except Maureen Gally—she's fit

And it's a friendly.

Eva looks an obnoxious green soup into her mother's mouth. She starts choking. The greenish life seeped out from her mouth then turns blood red. Martha is dead.

Ang (screams). But Eva can't cope. He gives up. Burning his mind gone. He becomes a local handyman. A year later, he hears his mother's voice telling him to bring her back.

He picks up his coffee. There she is. Her face, her clothes, everything exactly as it was in life. She is even faintly smiling. He happily cleans her white-gloved hand — and her arm comes off. She tries back and uses his mother as she really is — a decomposed, wobbly pulp.

He carries her home, lays her on her old bed and kindly looks after "Until they took you back together like that old egg in the fairytale," he says. The camera pans across the room. There, standing in the corridor, is the narrator. He explains Eva decided to use real skin for the repainting.

The narrator sums the film, but don't blame the British distributors. They have entirely cut out as much of them as possible. Why they couldn't cut out his tongue? We can only assume he is some attempted joke their mothers. Because in fact, *Damaged* is intentionally a very, very funny movie.

The film is amazingly talentless. Whereas The Texas Chain Saw Massacre is just plain silly, *Damaged* is effectively banal, messy and, in some places, tacky. All the characters are superbly underemployed, particularly a magnificently lecherous drunk, and Robert Hossein's central performance as Eva. He is a great re-actor. He wanders through the film with a slightly pained expression on his face. He's a perfectly frank, open, innocent simpleton and credid.

Throughout the movie he tells her night-bounds exactly what he is doing, but they won't believe him. Oh, what a fool, they say. Old Eva's going to dig up her ex-Sunday School teacher because her dead mother needs a new face. It's a one, that Eva. He ho.

Eva dons her boater and just goes out to meet his friendly比邻Sally. He pretends in first, he says he talks to his mother.

"Mr Cobb, are you making fun of me?" Marianne asks.

"No, ma'am," says Eva, who would never dream of lying.

Well you see, says Marianne, she talks to Herbert her husband. He was buried to death in a car accident. Says, why didn't we have a four-wheeler? Her bar's never met Mrs Cobb. Eva goes home to another orchard but he has a chubby woman but is afraid he might get stuck in all that forest and doesn't think Marianne is all there — you know — upstems.

But he goes back to see her for the score. Herbert's spirit speaks through Marianne. Eva's heart being disturbed,

it leaves the — ahem — "normal aspect" of marriage. Perhaps Eva can help? "Mama my wife a woman again," says Herbert. Marianne abducts her given.

Eva decides he does like her women and they go off to the bedroom but he's not quite sure what to do. Then, he remembers the wages of sin, that nasty social disease and how all women are scum. Marianne undresses Eva's shirt and finds a gun, he can feel his trigger on the trigger. He blasts her bullet through her head, then takes her home to his mother for compensation.

Eva's next victim is Mary Parsons, a nervous young woman whom he loves to his isolated house. When she enters his home, alone, she feels shattered, uncleaned, chaotic, animal bones and a stuffed bird. She hears a squeaking noise and goes into a small room. On the floor she sees a decomposing cadaver. Shuddering back, she stumbles across a group of five corpses wearing gaudy dresses, sitting in chairs with ice-cups as their legs. Then she sees one of the corpses is alive. It is Eva wearing a shiny wig and face-makeup of dried human skin. Mary tries to escape but is caught and is forced to sex with the various decomposing bodies Eva has collected. He has decided to marry Mary. He plays music on a drum made of bathtubs using a leg bone as a drumstick. "I'm just trying to show you I got talents," he says.

After a lot of floods and funerals, Mary manages to smash Eva on the head with a bottle and thus unsuccessfully to escape. He forces her to have sex motion. Part of the scene has been cut by the British distributor because, they say, "it looked bloody ill."

Eva is caught and Eva bludgeons her very very bloody to death with her metal bathtub. He honestly tells his two closest neighbours that the Mary Parsons reported missing is really dead in his house with his old Sunday School teacher, his mother and a few other corpses. But they don't believe him. However, they do begin to worry when he kills their son's girlfriend. Incidentally, as Eva gets older, his girl victims get younger.

Young Sally works in the local tannery, piggies, bakes, and normoie backpacks. One day, a lone with her. She loads one of the often lying about a nail into it at her. She smiles at him and pushes onto the floor as the bullet hits her.

He takes Sally bound on the temple back towards his place of her truck but she escapes in the woods. Her boyfriend and his father are hunting in those woods. There are traps set everywhere. As a terrified Sally runs and stumbles through the forest, one of the steel traps snags what's on her ankle. Eva is coming — she can hear him.

She hides in the bushes. Eva uses the chain attached to the trap. He pulls on the chain and the trap's steel jaws pull Sally out by the ankles. Eva raises his gun and

Bass. This time Sally is very dead.

By now, her friends have discovered that she is missing and that Eva was the last person to see her. Throughout the film where they discover that both Eva and the Broad Cancer have been cutting out some very, very nasty bits and pieces.

Surprisingly a joy. So ugly for such lowers off the grotesque, Tommy Cooper or Lee Devereux. Not at all a typical horror film but a totally straight terror picture whose horrors and underplayed, unemphasized horrors sit it well above the normal exploitation movie.

(B)RITAIN (1974)

Linda Cardellini, Dr. Almond, Robert Hossein, Sir John Gielgud with Marlene Dietrich, Mary Parsons and Connie Lee. Prod. Tim Ken, Dir. Jeff Gillen and Alan Gandy. Scr. Alan Cimino. Ph. Jack McGowen. Sc. Effects. Alan Demsky and Tim Sherwin.  
An American-International Pictures Corp. X 19 min. (not in US).

## HALLOWEEN

### Review

by Anthony Tabb

**H**alloween is the diagrammatic man of Psycho. Not everyone is prepared to admit this, but facts are facts. Of all the psycho-slasher films in recent years, *Halloween* remains not only the best of the bunch, but also the most original in its approach. Nobody knows, least of all University of Southern California graduate John Carpenter that his film would go on to gross in excess of \$30 million dollars, thereby making it the most profitable independent production of all time.

Previously Carpenter had played a major part in the making of a short, *The Resurrection of Breezy Billy*, which won an Academy Award in 1969 and had completed a film at USC with classmate Dan O'Bannon entitled *Dark Star*. This was later bootlegged to feature length and shown at Filmex in 1974. Bed distribution however allowed the film to drift into near obscurity until later years and it took his next film, the sequel *Assault on Precinct 12* to boost the low ignored in the United States, even heralded by the critics at the London Film Festival in 1977 and from Yul Brynner, who released *Assault on Precinct 12* in attendance. He offered Carpenter an idea which he called *The Baby-sitter's Blues* and he accepted, turning it into what we all know now to be *Halloween*.

The basic premise of the story revolves around one Michael Myers, who in 1963 at the age of six, brutally kills his sister Judith. Coming out of it in a mentally unstable state — not that he was all there to begin with — he guards the hill 15

years in South Geva Mental Hospital under the supervision of Dr Loewen. In spite of performances from Donald Pleasence. On October 30th 1978. However, Michael escapes... The rest of the film is taken up with Michael's macabre mischiefs as he singles out a young girl named Laurie (Jamie Lee Curtis) for the culmination (we are led to believe) of his psychopathic whishes with Loewen frantic search for *The Shape*.

Carpenter assembled a fine cast which gave Jamie Lee Curtis her first important role and she handles it well. Nancy Stephens gives a fairly believable - well, how believable are teenagers depicted in American movies usually? -

performance, yet the film belongs in many ways to Donald Pleasence who conveys Loewen's feelings of guilt and remorse, feeling that he is responsible for Michael and therefore responsible for the deaths, in a way that only an actor of his depth could.

*Halloween* is a standout amongst the kind of film on its cinematic techniques, using a penitentiary camera to superb effect, leading us in classes to reveal a feeling of personal horror and fear, a sense of cumulative paranoia (so very prominent in *Holiday*).

The penitentiary photography by Dean Cundey is framed with an almost hard edge, often seen even in the best of gangster flicks. The music too adds to a general sense of menace in its repetitive pulsing sounds which add, one might say, an almost phallic concept of *Halloween* with "trick or treat" being the most banal aspect of the holiday now brought to the fore in a sadistic form of torment.

It is not without *Pewee* that it perhaps a little too long - just a little. Occasionally it is annoyingly perverse in what we the audience feel it should be saying or showing. So many of the mysteries we wanted to find out the answers to, were not revealed until the disappointing sequel *Halloween II*, in a haphazard and distressed series. There is a subconscious urge on the part of the audience when viewing it to do the idea of death personified the inescapable form of the "final sleep". Dr Loewen punctuates this. *The Shape* (or address to the previous world) yet he will live. When I wonder how to see the supposedly dead Michael return from the balcony he is set there. Not even walking away, but just... vanished.

The series, like so many based on a good original concept, looks like it is doomed to the road of mediocrity, though to be fair, *Halloween II* - *Brazen* of the *Whiz* (not truly a sequel) is fairly original in its presentation and a definite cut above the second *Pewee*. But let us remember how the originalised, according to all who were involved, proved that on a limited budget you can make a film of intelligence and integrity from subject matter that does not always warrant the costs it receives.

## HALLOWEEN (1978)

Donald Pleasence (as Dr Loewen), Jamie Lee Curtis (as Laurie), Nancy Stephens (as Anna), P.J. Soles (as Lynda), Charles Cyphers (as Doctor), Kyle Rarick (as Lemmy), Meg Foster (as The Shape), with John Michael Graham and Nancy Stephens. Directed by John Carpenter, Produced by Debra Hill, Screenplay by Carpenter and Hill, Cinematography by Deon Sandby, Music by John Carpenter, Edited by Tommy Williams and Charles Bonham-Carter. A Company International Pictures Release of a Fudge International Production. 83 minutes. Cert. X.

## FRIDAY THE 13<sup>th</sup>

### Review by Anthony Tate

*I*f *Halloween* was the film which raised psycho-thriller cult status to a level of 'art', then *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* was the film that brought things back into perspective. Produced like *Halloween* on a low-budget, there is a resounding success at the box-office, thanks for the first time by the distribution of a major studio, Paramount. It was the big league interest that began to ensure a number of less individuals who set up and said, "With a minute, we're treating a fast buck movie concerning brutal murders and butchery as a permanent part of an important movie trend". It does make one think about the implications and moral placing for a moment.

Sean S. Cunningham produced and directed with a hand as rapier as John Carpenter's - assuming John was trying to write poetry with a double wooden mallet and in this case are moments of subtlety which could have been worthy of *Peyton* if only they had been handled with care, something Cunningham has trouble understanding. That the film was such a success assures it of its place in genre history and as such warrants discussion.

Cunningham produced Wes Craven's earlier exercise *Last House on the Left* (1972) which, despite being a truly sick film, showed Wes Craven's potential as a director, especially in his handling of "tough" material. Given the right film he could be a master, though to yet he has not been given that apparently. It is his honesty as a filmmaker that shows in his films. Cunningham feels that, as witnessed in his earlier efforts including *Peer Witch Trials Part II* (1972) and *Kids* (1979).

The plot (there is one - just!) of *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* follows a series of murders at Camp Crystal Lake, 22 years after a fire incident took place in 1958. The gory goings-on that follow lack paving in the build-up needed to bring the horror off. Only in the final sequence (a rip-off from

the end of the excellent *Carrie* (1976) with the sheep) and the film achieves anything like what it needs. Above all, the most striking aspect of the film is the insipidly rotten middle third of us. The "dumb" teenagers behaviour happened to the party very believably late in *Halloween*, the thunderstorm which stirs up at the climax so coincidentally, the car that runs out of gas at the wrong moment and an odd newscast.

From a technical standpoint, Barry Bostwick's photography is relatively pedestrian - except for the final scene - not taking the opportunity when there are. Harry Manfredini's music is suitably crazy and menacing, though lacking in overall enthusiasm. It seems to fall heavily on a standard Hammer style. Too heavy. The performances are uninspired, often laughable, with Barry Palmer in particular going way over the top. What stands out in the film is Tom Savini's gloriously gross make-up effects, this is the real star. Only in one scene does the film come close to the artistic integrity of *Peyton* and *Halloween*: during the sequence where Jason has a metal recollection of a drowning boy in the lake. It is stylish enough to stand out of place in this film.

That the film was successful enough to spawn not one but two sequels, with possibly a third one to come (these Paramount spew out very something about today's audience, especially American movie-goers). If Part 1 is a bad film though not entirely a bad one, then Part 2 leaves a bad taste in the mouth. Yet now, with Part 3 in glorious 3-D comes the final nail in the coffin. *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* is called junk, the kind of junk that American audiences can do. But it's truly enjoyable junk because it really refuses to take itself seriously and that may be the salvation for this hopefully last-to-second series. Part 3 plays more for laughs (well, some are quite unintentional) than you would expect and that is what saves the film from being totally offensive.

*Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* had its day and has its place in genre history. Now please let us accept its death and no doubt lamented rebirth in the form of *Peyton II*.

## Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>

1980  
Berry Palmer (as Mr. Karcher), Adrienne King (as Alice), Harry Crosby (as Bill), Laura Gemser (as Brenda), Mark Nelson (as Ned), Jeannine Taylor (as Marci), Robbie Morgan (as Annette), Kevin Bacon (as Jack).

Produced and directed by Sean S. Cunningham, written by Walter Hillian, Associate Producer Stephen Miner, Director of photography Barry Bostwick, Music by Harry Manfredini, Special Make-up Effects Tom Savini.  
A Paramount release. 83 minutes. Cert. X.

# CAMPBELL'S COLUMN

**S**o Scotland Yard's persecution of videocassettes has achieved something, and the censorship of films on cassette is in even worse disrepute than the censorship of movies. We're back to the good old days when horror had to be sold under the counter (from Marowitz's *Not for the Squashed* in the forties, DC comics in the fifties) till they're only video nasties, and even the anti-censorship lobby can't be expected to care. Newspapers have made sure that any reference of the banned films looks as suspect as the films have been made to seem.

This is not exaggeration. The *Daily Express*, that bastion of freedom, even condemned video megastars for reviewing the films at all. Peter Chippendale, the *Sunday Times* crusader for video nasties, stayed mostly unspecific about the films against which he was crusading, except to note details of cannibalism and multiple murder. Had he been assigned to assess the paper's reputation after another staff writer had suggested in the colour supplement that a video film about cannibalism could be fun? Had he even seen any of the films? Never mind all that; the point is that he prevented the rest of us from doing so. Or rather, not really, though I'm sure he would have liked to. In fact the offending titles are still in many libraries, and the names of those reverberate on the shelf, despite the artificial publicity it seems that people's taste can be trusted more than the censors would have us believe. Of course the titles of the films are pathetic trash. *Driller Killer*, which has nothing to offer on any level except the graphic scenes shown on the cassette box, or *88 Experiment Camp*, which uses the concentration camp as an excuse for soft-core sex and nude torture scenes. One can certainly see objections on grounds of taste (though how much more so than to the American television broadcast of *Holocaust*, its death-scare scenes interrupted by potty-mouth commercials?) and to the bluntness of *Driller Killer's* appeal (though one might argue that its incompetence makes it uncharitably more honest about that appeal than, say, Friday the 13th), and I should not want to defend either film. The question is rather whether I should have to. Why should films and other fiction be treated as guilty until proven innocent? I believe it's the banning of a film that has to be defended, and in advance.

So what precisely is the objection to, say, *Masates*? (I mean the recent cassette, not William Castle's black-and-white film.) I must give away the plot to make my point, but the secret of the film is there to be seen on the cassette box: this is the one about the lady who keeps her husband's severed head in the freezer when it isn't on her pillow. If the title is objectionable — and the film never attempts to persuade us that such behaviour is appealing — what are we to

say of Oscar Wilde's play and Richard Strauss's opera, in which sexual obsession with a severed head is presented as deeply romantic? (The climax of the opera is, quite simply, orgasmic.) *Ali*, but *Masates* is a film, and so must be suppressed? Why?

It may no longer be a case of treating film more harshly than the other arts; it looks more like one aspect of a growing censorship in Britain, including printed material — no great surprise from a government which, for example, proscribes educational freedom while closing comprehensive schools. This is where the term 'nasty' is useful, by suggesting that once a film is classed as 'nasty' no further distinctions need or should be made. It informs the term was invented by a nice reporter, though perhaps not publishers have been using it for years to market the sub-James Herriot type that is flooding the bookshelves in bookshops and drowning the game.) That way, a film such as *Death Trap* can be swept away with the rest.

*Death Trap* is Tom Hopper's most successful entry in disturbingly bleak comedy to date — Payne relocated in a setting as artificial as a Technicolor musical and revised as an uneasy joke. Hardly has Neville Brand murdered a female guest in his hotel, than a family with no own madmen take a room, followed by the murdered girl's father, with Brand's response to a photograph of the dead girl providing the most disconcertingly hilarious jolt in the film. Of course there are scenes of disturbing violence; there needs to be, otherwise the film would be merely comedy. Although the cassette is marketed as the uncut version, it seems to me to differ little from the version released to British cinemas, and I strongly suspect that the scenes for which the jury convicted the film were present in the uncensored version. I would call that censoring by the back door, and deplorable.

Which brings us back to the disparity of censorship. British film censorship is our longest-running habit, not only in the vital matter of cutting and banning, but also in terms of certificates. Recent examples include an A, now a PEGI, for *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, but an X, alas 18, for *Pollack*, apparently to please Spielberg, who rightly felt that a horror film with a minor certificate would be shunned off by potential audiences. An AA, now 16, for *Grease 2*, to the dismay of the distributor, who vainly begged George Harrison for gory cut-takes. It is also blatantly apparent that material will be banned if the film is British but not if it is not. Consider just one film, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. A spokesman for the BFI declared that the film would have been given a certificate if the distributor had accepted cuts in two scenes: the finale, in which the grandfather tortures Marilyn Burns, and the earlier scene in which she is chased with the

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charities given the material which the BSCC were prepared to leave in the film, anyone who can make sense of that discussion deserves a prize.

It's hardly surprising that video distributors are floundering. BFI discovered (strangely) that they were distributing a print of *The Bunting* which was fifteen seconds longer than the certified print, and asked all video libraries to return their copies for replacement by the authorized version. (I gather the responses from video libraries were short and old-fashioned.) Even in the cut print, Teri Bauer's makeup is spectacularly gruesome, yet many one of Bauer's makeup has been cut from interviewee's print of *Mandal*. I have not been able to find out if this was done in consultation with the BSCC, but if it was, one can hardly blame Interviewer for wanting to be safe rather than sorry. It looks like interviewee's all the same, particularly since the makeup seems to have been the film's only claim to fame.

The greatest moment of releasing films on video—perhaps the only one—is that it could bypass the vagueness of censorship. Now it looks as if films unreleased to cinemas will have to be cut according to exactly the same haphazard standards (possibly not haphazard in theory, but certainly in practice) as cinema prints, which takes no account of the way films are disseminated by television. (Ask any of the tenches who supported the printed BFI's *Save Peter on the Sunday Times* seems worried because viewers can now porn scenes, and in slow motion too. Of course they can, and run the tape in the process, but so what? The crucial effect of video is that it changes film from an experience which, unlike prose, requires the audience to submit to its pace and its effects into an utterly controllable experience. Re-running makes effects, particularly in slow motion, simply miles clear how they were achieved, certainly in the case of the simultaneously revolting and uncomprehending *Brett*.)

The deepest reason for the growth of video censorship is that children are being allowed to see such films. As a parent, I can understand the anxiety—but all the same, that argument leads inevitably to preventing all film censures for children from being released on video, a proposal I imagine might give even the most crusading parents pause. My suspicion is that the experts are the staff of video libraries, many of whom couldn't care less how young their customers are or how unsuitable the material is that they borrow. Can it not be made law that all members of the library must be over 18, and that libraries must be licensed on this understanding? If not, may we know why? It's time that film—in particular the horror film—ceased to be made the scapegoat for censorship.

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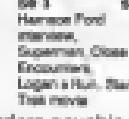
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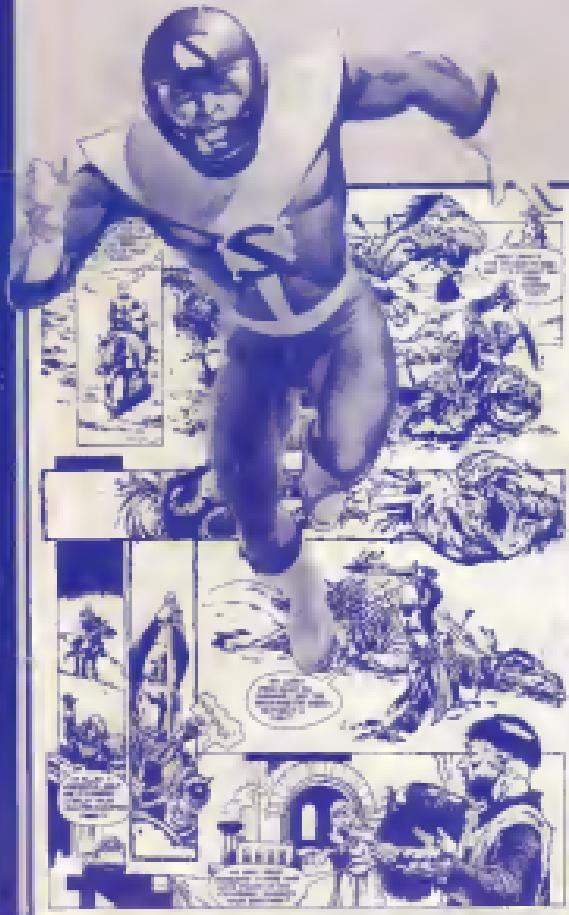
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